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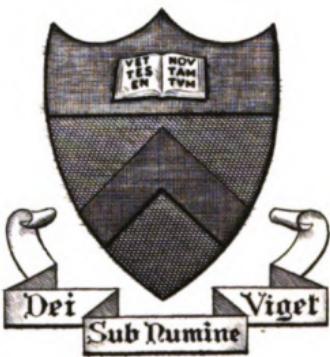


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WAR TALES

MOCKLER-FERRYMAN

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WATERLOO, 1815.

ROUT OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD BY THE 52ND.

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REGIMENTAL WAR TALES

1741—1914.

TOLD FOR THE SOLDIERS OF THE
OXFORDSHIRE AND BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY
(THE OLD 43RD AND 52ND).

BY

LIEUT-COLONEL A. F. MOCKLER-FERRYMAN.
111

“Quebec, 1759,” “Martinique, 1762, 1794,” “Havannah,” “Mysore,” “Hindoo-stan,” “Vimiera,” “Corunna,” “Busaco,” “Fuentes d’Onor,” “Ciudad Rodrigo,” “Salamanca,” “Vittoria,” “Pyrenees,” “Nivelle,” “Nive,” “Orthes,” “Toulouse,” “Peninsula,” “Waterloo,” “South Africa,” “1851-2-3,” “Delhi,” “New Zealand,” “South Africa, 1900-02,” “Relief of Kimberley,” “Paardeberg.”

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PREFACE.

THE principal object of this book is to place before the soldiers of the OXFORDSHIRE AND BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY a war-time story of their Regiment, and to show them that for nearly a century and a half their ancestors of the 43rd and 52nd fought for their King, Queen, and Country as valiantly as their comrades of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry did subsequently, and as they themselves are actually doing at the present time.

The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry until quite recently consisted of two Regular battalions, one Special Reserve battalion, and two Territorial battalions. The Regular, or 1st and 2nd Battalions are the old 43rd and 52nd; the 3rd, or Special Reserve, Battalion was formerly designated the Oxfordshire Militia; while the Territorial Battalions are the old Oxford Volunteers, and the 1st Bucks Volunteers. Now there have been added several new battalions, whose deeds will doubtless prove them to be worthy of belonging to the Regiment.

The 43rd Regiment was raised in 1741, and was at first numbered 54, though in 1748 (when the Army was reduced) it was re-numbered 43. Curiously enough, the 52nd, which was raised in 1755, was also numbered 54, but only for a short time. In 1782 His Majesty King George III initiated the idea of attaching regiments to counties, and the 43rd was henceforward known as the MONMOUTHSHIRE Regiment, while the 52nd was at the same time affiliated with OXFORDSHIRE. For some few years after they were raised, neither regiment saw active service, being employed on garrison duty in the United Kingdom and the Mediterranean. Then followed years of war in Canada, the West

Indies, America, and India, succeeded by a short period of peace, devoted to that thorough training, under SIR JOHN MOORE at Shorncliffe, which resulted in producing in the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Rifles what has been described as *a perfect system of drill and discipline.*

In 1803, just before this training commenced, the 43rd and 52nd were both made LIGHT INFANTRY, and a few years later, when the Peninsular War broke out, they and their comrades of the 95th Rifles formed the famous LIGHT DIVISION, of which the historian of the war wrote, *Six years of warfare could not detect a flaw in their system, nor were they ever matched in courage or skill. Those three regiments were avowedly the best that England ever had under arms. This is no idle boast.*

From 1804 to 1817 the 43rd had two battalions, and from 1799 to 1816 (with the exception of a few months in 1804) the 52nd also had two battalions. The services of these several battalions will be dealt with at length; suffice it to say here that one or all fought with valour in the Peninsula, at New Orleans, and at Waterloo, afterwards receiving permission to bear on their Colours the names of the principal battles in which they had been engaged.

With the withdrawal of the Army of Occupation from France, came "piping times of peace," spent in such quarters as Gibraltar, Canada, and the West Indies; and in 1827 the 43rd renewed its acquaintance with Portugal, when it proceeded to Lisbon with Sir H. Clinton's force, in response to an appeal to England for protection against a threatened attack by Spain. More years of garrison life at home and abroad ensued, but in 1851 the 43rd proceeded to South Africa to take part in the Kaffir War until 1853, and in the following year both regiments found themselves in India. During the Indian Mutiny campaign the 43rd and 52nd were continuously engaged with the rebels, and from 1863 to 1866 the 43rd was on active service in New Zealand.

In 1881, almost a hundred years after the introduction of county titles, the infantry regiments of the army were

re-arranged, re-linked, and in many cases re-named. The time-honoured numbers were officially abolished once and for all, and the 43rd and 52nd became the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the OXFORDSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY. In 1908 came a further change, and the title of the Regiment was altered to the OXFORDSHIRE AND BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY. There is little more to be said, for the services of the Regiment in Egypt, Burma, India, and South Africa in later years will be fully recorded in the following pages. Here we have only attempted to give the briefest outline of the life-story of the Regiment, preferring to deal in successive chapters with each of its campaigns.

The general reader may be inclined to think that the contents of these pages are over-boastful, but he must remember that the book has been written "for the soldiers of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry," that it is, as it were, a family history compiled for the sons of the Regiment, that it contains accounts of the deeds of their ancestors, and that its main object is to foster among future generations of regimental soldiers that great *Esprit de Corps* for which the old 43rd and 52nd were ever famous.

To the Regimental reader we offer no apologies for the many shortcomings in this book; he will, we know, be gentle in his criticism. We have done our best to show him the heritage which has been raised up for him by those who have gone before. Though clothed in khaki, like his fellow-soldier of every other corps, he should be mindful of the fact that he belongs to a regiment, "*never surpassed in arms since arms were first borne by man*," which, at one time or another, has been quartered, either as friend or as conqueror, in the capitals of France, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Belgium, and Holland, in Canada, in America, in most of the West Indian Islands, in India, Ceylon, New Zealand, Burma, and Siam, in South Africa and in Egypt, as well as in Minorca, Malta, and Gibraltar; which has fought under Wolfe, Cornwallis, Moore, Wellington, Craufurd, Outram, Roberts, Kitchener, and other distinguished commanders, and which has given to the British army five Field-Marshals

and innumerable officers of fame—a regiment, moreover, whose Colours bear the names of many brilliant victories, and which for seven years had as its Colonel-in-Chief His Most Faithful Majesty, Charles I, King of Portugal and the Algarves, K.G., who was cruelly assassinated in his capital on the 1st February, 1908.

The part that the Regiment has played in the making of the Empire may of itself seem small and unimportant ; yet, that it has played that part faithfully and to the best of its ability we hope to show.

* * * * *

These pages were passing through the press when war broke out in the early autumn of 1914. For a time they were laid aside, but it has now been decided to give them to the world, and leave the story of the Great War of the 20th Century to be told in a subsequent volume.

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REGIMENTAL WAR TALES.

CHAPTER I.

NORTH AMERICA, 1757—1760.

War between England and France.

IN North America (Canada), the 43rd first saw service, sailing from Cork some 700 strong in May 1757, and reaching Halifax, Nova Scotia, after a voyage of seven or eight weeks.

At this time practically the whole of North America belonged to the French, though England laid claim to Nova Scotia (or Acadia), and possessed a settlement at Halifax, with garrisons at Annapolis Royal, Fort Cumberland, and the three little ports of Forts Sackville, Lunenberg and Edward, all of which were hemmed in by the French and cut off from the interior. England, however, on the other hand, had vast possessions further south, viz., what are now called the United States of America.

So hostile were the French to our small North American garrisons that it was impossible for the troops even to gather firewood in the neighbourhood of their posts, without running the risk of being cut off by the French outposts and their Red Indian scouts, who had the unpleasant habit of scalping anyone whom they captured. To put a stop to this sort of thing was the object of the expedition (consisting of 5,000 men), which left England in 1757 to co-operate with Lord Loudoun's New York force



GRENADIER, 43RD REGIMENT.

Quebec Campaign.

of 6,000 men. The original plan had been to capture Louisburg, on Cape Breton Island, the “Dunkirk of America,” but for some reason or other the plan was abandoned for the time being, and the 43rd had to settle down to garrison duty, with very little excitement for the next eighteen months or more. Louisburg was eventually captured from the French in December 1758, and, in the following May, WOLFE prepared for his great campaign, in which he proposed to make a simultaneous attack on the principal French strongholds in North America, and the 43rd forthwith proceeded to Louisburg, to join Wolfe’s own force, destined for the attack on QUEBEC.

Wolfe personally inspected the Regiment on its arrival, and saw it manœuvred with blank ammunition, expressing his opinion at the conclusion in the following terms:—“I have never seen greater regularity, closer fire, arms better levelled, or less disorder, in any other regiment since I have had the honour to be an officer.” High praise indeed from such a man, and more particularly appreciated by the officers because the Regiment had been for nearly two years broken up in detachments—a state of affairs usually detrimental to the efficiency of a corps without any old traditions to maintain.

A few weeks were now spent in drill both on land and in boats, and on the 5th June, 1759, the transports got under way, the force being landed on the 27th on the Isle of Orleans, near which the French were reported to be. A reconnaissance was at once made, and the enemy was discovered to be in a strong, prepared position between Quebec and the Falls of Montmorency. Wolfe considered it almost impregnable, and so decided to await events, devoting the next six weeks to throwing up earthworks and strengthening his own position, in hopes of the French assuming the offensive. This they refused to do, contenting themselves with vain attempts to destroy our fleet by floating fireships down the river, and at last Wolfe determined to attack their position at Montmorency.

In those days each infantry regiment had a Grenadier

Company as well as a Light Company—the Grenadiers being all men specially selected for their stature and physique, and the Light Company consisting of picked men who were trained scouts and marksmen. These two companies were known (from their order on parade) as the "flank companies," and, since they were always foremost in the fray, it was considered an honour to belong to them. At Montmorency they opened the ball, for the Grenadier Companies of the army were told off to lead the attack, while the remainder of the regiments supported them.* All the Grenadiers of the army landed at Point de Leste on the evening of the 31st July, 1759, causing the enemy to abandon the battery and redoubt below the cliff; they then attempted to rush the higher works without waiting for reinforcements, but the task proved an impossible one. The enemy poured in a volley on the advancing Grenadiers, who, knowing that they could not re-load if they once fired off their muzzle-loading muskets, continued to advance without returning the fire. A second volley made so many gaps in the assailants' ranks, that the attack lost all cohesion and the men were forced to retire. It was too late for reinforcements, and Wolfe, seeing what had happened ordered the troops to draw off and re-embark. It had been a costly evening's work, for our losses amounted to nearly 500 killed and wounded, and the one 43rd company engaged lost no fewer than 9 men killed and 2 officers and 13 men wounded.

Wolfe seems to have been disheartened at this failure, and, before resuming operations, sent a despatch to England which caused consternation to those at home. Yet, as was soon proved, he was not the man to give in without a struggle, and within a month he had formed his plans, and determined to attempt an assault on the Heights of Abraham. In conjunction with the fleet, the troops began to move on the 6th September, and endeavoured for some

* The Grenadier Companies of regiments, and the Light Companies of regiments usually operated as battalions, until about 1803. This system of taking away the best men of a regiment was repeated, in more recent times, in the formation of mounted infantry battalions.

days to effect a landing at favourable points on the river bank, at the same time hoping to deceive the enemy as to the real point of attack. Some hours before dawn on the morning of the 13th September, 1759, 1,600 men were landed a little to the east of Sillery, almost before the enemy knew what was happening; but the sentries on the heights above soon opened fire, and seven men of the 43rd were killed or wounded in their boat before reaching the shore. While it was still dark the light companies quietly scaled the heights, and the officer in command (who spoke French fluently), when challenged, replied that he had orders from the French General to relieve the outposts with fresh troops, whereupon the line of sentries promptly withdrew, leaving the position in our hands. The remainder of the troops now clambered up the precipice, and, when day dawned, the British army was occupying the line of the north bank of the river from near Quebec to Sillery. The Light Companies were immediately sent off to the left to seize the enemy's batteries, and at the same time the army moved to the right towards Quebec and filed along the summit of the cliff until the Plains of Abraham were reached.

THE CAPTURE OF QUEBEC.

By six o'clock the enemy could be seen in front of Quebec, ready to oppose the advance, and the British force at once formed front and prepared for battle. The situation was as follows:—Quebec itself lay in the angle formed by the St. Lawrence River and the St. Charles River; and on the Plains of Abraham, to the south-west of the town, were drawn up the opposing armies, the British right resting on the high cliffs of the St. Lawrence, and the left extending towards the St. Charles. The battle that now commenced was one of the old-fashioned kind; the French and English stood looking at each other at a distance of less than half a mile; our light companies had posted themselves to protect the left flank, while the grenadier companies watched the cliffs and shore line on the

right flank. The various British regiments were drawn up in three lines, the first line (under General Wolfe) consisted of six regiments, of which the 43rd was in the centre ; the second line had two regiments ; and one regiment was held in reserve. Everything was done quietly and in order, and the French began the fight by firing round shot and canister at our lines. These did little harm, but a party of Red Indians, employed by the French, caused our right flank a good deal of annoyance by their musket fire from a field of standing corn, until they were driven out by two or three of our companies.

So far nothing of any moment had occurred, but at eight o'clock two of our brass 6-pounders made things uncomfortable for the enemy, and obliged him to change his formation. At nine o'clock the two armies drew a little closer, and the French attempted to turn our left flank, but unsuccessfully. Then, about an hour later, the French advanced boldly in three columns, shouting as they came on. Two columns attacked the left of the British line, while the third column attacked the right. They commenced to deliver their musketry at about one hundred and thirty yards, but so well-disciplined were the British soldiers that they stood calmly watching the advance, without firing a shot, until the enemy was within fifty yards of the line, when the guns poured in grape, and the first line of infantry delivered a volley. The effect was instantaneous ; the French turned, and fled ; and the British dashed forward in pursuit almost up to the walls of the town. The victory was complete, but the rose had its thorn, for Wolfe had been struck down in the fight, though not before he had had the joy of knowing that he had won the day. He led the charge in person, was shot in the wrist, and finally in the breast. His last words, as he lay mortally wounded, are well known ; someone near him exclaimed, "They run ! They run !" On hearing which Wolfe raised himself, and eagerly inquired, " *Who* run ?" "The enemy, Sir ; they give way everywhere." The General gave a sigh of relief, issued a few hasty orders for cutting off the enemy's retreat,

and muttering, "Now, God be praised, I rest in peace," immediately expired.

The casualties in the battle were on both sides severe, the French loss being upwards of 1,500 (including their Commander-in-Chief, the Marquis de Montcalm, mortally wounded), and the English 664. The 43rd had 3 men killed, and 1 officer and 22 men wounded and missing.

Quebec itself was not captured that day, but four days later the town capitulated, and the Union Jack was soon flying over the citadel. This glorious victory in reality crippled for ever the French power in Canada, and gained for Great Britain one of her most valuable and loyal Colonial possessions, but the French even yet were not vanquished, and before long they made desperate attempts to retrieve the situation—within an ace of success.

THE DEFENCE OF QUEBEC.

In October between 6,000 and 7,000 British troops were quartered in Quebec, and endeavouring to make themselves comfortable in the ruined quarters for the approaching winter. Whatever happened, no reinforcements could be expected to reach the place until the spring; for, for several months, the land would be deep in snow and the river frozen hard. Under such circumstances the news of a French attack came somewhat as a surprise, though it was soon evident that the enemy intended to carry on a winter campaign. The English General occupied detached posts at some distance from the town, and constant skirmishes took place with the enemy, who had nearly 20,000 men in the neighbourhood throughout the winter, and who kept the British practically besieged in Quebec. The position was none too pleasant, and our men, badly clothed, and short of food, suffered much from the climate and disease, though their spirits were kept up by the knowledge that the French were even in worse straits. The French commander planned an assault on Quebec, but it was never carried out, and, in spite of his boast that he

would eat his Christmas dinner in the city, the winter commenced to break without any advance having been made. With the coming of spring the Frenchman grew more confident than ever, and sent a message to the British general offering to bet him five hundred louis that a French fleet would arrive up the river before an English one. To this General Murray replied, "I have no wish to win your money, for I have not the slightest doubt but that I shall have the pleasure of embarking your Excellency, and the remains of your half-starved army, in British bottoms before the end of the season."

By April 1760 the British garrison could boast no more than 3,000 fighting men, and the French were enormously superior in numbers. To all the crisis seemed at hand, for unless relief should come soon it would be almost impossible to withstand an assault. The enemy's spirits rose with the melting of the snow and the thawing of the river ice, and the French general, knowing full well that the arrival of a British fleet would be his death-blow, determined at length to drive the garrison out of Quebec before the relief should come. There was only one possible way of taking the town—the way in which Wolfe had captured it from Montcalm—by a desperate struggle on the Plains of Abraham, and on the 28th April, 1760, the struggle commenced, with what is known as the BATTLE OF SILLERY, or ST. FOY. The battlefield was to all intents and purposes the same as that on which seven months before the two armies had tried their strength; the conditions of the fight were, however, entirely altered, for the French and British had reversed their positions, and the ground was deep in the slush of the melted snow. As in a game of football, the opponents had changed goals, and the second half was to be played out on ground fouled by bad weather. Moreover, the British team had been weakened by casualties, while the Frenchmen had unlimited resources to fall back upon.

The battle opened with an affair of outposts. The French were in possession of St. Foy, with advanced posts

well forward. The British light troops were ordered to drive in the enemy's outposts, which they successfully did. This accomplished, the British army marched out of Quebec on to the Plains of Abraham, General MURRAY preferring a fight in the open to defending the town against an assault. With the light troops protecting the flanks, the advance was made in two lines (the 43rd in the centre of the front line), and twenty cannons were dragged into action by 500 men. Thus the British line as it moved forward had its left resting on the precipice up which Wolfe's men had so gallantly climbed in the previous battle, and its right extending to the St. Charles, and had the British general awaited the French attack, it is more than probable that he would have utterly routed the enemy in spite of the vast numerical superiority of the French. But Murray felt that the mantle of Wolfe had fallen on him, that he was leading Wolfe's veterans against a foe whom they had thrashed before, and that it required but dash and determination to defeat the Frenchmen and get rid of them for ever. Our artillery pounded the enemy's columns as they issued from the woods of St. Foy, while the light troops drove back their grenadiers on the left and captured a redoubt on the right. The French turned and fled in a panic, and Murray, imagining that the day was won, pushed on in hot pursuit, unmindful of the fact that in so doing he was abandoning his strong position. For some little time all went well, but as the pursuit continued the pursuers found their progress barred by the swamps and slushy state of the country. The guns got hopelessly bogged, and the infantry could hardly drag their legs out of the mud; yet still they pressed forward, and though the French had by this time pulled themselves together and held tenaciously to their positions, Wolfe's veterans would not be denied. With magnificent impetuosity they carried position after position, confident that they were completing a victory equal to that of the previous year.

Victory was apparently within their grasp, but they had to reckon with the state of the country, and, when the

decisive moment arrived, they had run out of ammunition —their cartouche boxes were empty, and the ammunition wagons were stuck fast in the mud far away in the rear. The French saw the predicament, and were not slow to take advantage of it. Fresh troops were brought up, and the British were soon fighting against overwhelming odds. Then came the order to "fall back"—an order which was reluctantly obeyed. "D—n it," one man was heard to exclaim, "what is falling back but retreating?" Yet these war-stained soldiers were forced to give way on all sides, and across the historic Plains of Abraham the British army made a slow and dogged retirement towards Quebec. The French General, perhaps fortunately for the fate of Quebec, did not seize the opportunity, but relinquished the contest at the moment when he might have crushed all further resistance and captured the city.

Eleven hundred of the three thousand Englishmen engaged were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner, and the enemy subsequently acknowledged that they had lost more than eighteen hundred. Of the 43rd five men were killed, and three officers and sixteen men were wounded.

It had been a disastrous day, for they had been forced to spike and abandon their guns, and the isolated little army was now reduced to barely 2,000 fighting men. They had fought with the greatest valour, but, overwhelmed by the weightier numbers of the enemy, they could not do the impossible, and though obliged to seek refuge in Quebec, they never gave the question of surrender a thought. At once the garrison set to work at the defences; the women filled sandbags; and all the heavy guns were got into position. In the fortnight's rest that the French allowed them, they had made the place practically impregnable, and the enemy was afraid to risk an assault; moreover, fearing that the British would become desperate, the French general threw up entrenchments on the Plains of Abraham, to protect himself against sorties of the garrison. The British heavy guns, 150 in number, now began to bombard the enemy's trenches, and the French replied

vigorously. The casualties on the French side were fairly numerous, but the garrison, being well protected, did not suffer to anything like the same extent. Our men, however, had a sufficiently warm time of it, and there were many miraculous escapes. On one occasion four officers of the 43rd were sitting over a bowl of porridge, when a shell landed in the middle of them ; the party scattered and instantaneously fell flat on the ground, and to their astonishment not one of them was touched by the explosion of the shell, though the porridge had disappeared.

The garrison was gradually becoming reduced by disease, but still the spirits of the brave men never flagged ; come what might they would see it through to the bitter end—and the end came sooner than they expected. Everyone understood the situation, the outcome of which, now that the river ice was breaking, depended entirely on which fleet arrived up the St. Lawrence first. If it should be the French, then Quebec would be doomed ; if, on the other hand, the British fleet managed to put in an appearance before that of the enemy, then it would require but a small effort to drive the French out of the country. In this state of pent-up excitement the gallant defenders remained until the 9th May, when the first ship of the season was seen sailing up the river ; whether friend or foe was at first unknown, but the suspense was ended by the British Ensign being run up, and a salute of twenty-one guns being fired. She was the *Lowestoft* and she brought the joyful news that a British squadron was close behind. The garrison turned out, manned the ramparts, and to the discomfiture of the enemy cheered and shouted for half an hour. Within a week the fleet had arrived, and after a half-hearted resistance, the French were completely routed, and discarding their sick, wounded, and baggage, beat a hasty retreat.

Such was the DEFENCE OF QUEBEC, and, as the reader will have been able to judge, a far more arduous undertaking than the battle which resulted in its capture from the French in the previous year. Historians, however, are

apt to forget this episode in the conquest of Canada, though had Quebec failed to hold its own in the winter of 1759-60, the good work done by Wolfe would have been thrown away, and the conquest of Canada would have had to have been begun again. As events had turned out, to establish British supremacy in North America required but one more effort.

THE CAPTURE OF MONTREAL.

In the neighbourhood of Montreal the French prepared to make their last stand, and in August, 1760, the British fleet and land forces were ready to attack them. A garrison was left in Quebec, and about 2,500 men from various regiments joined General Amherst's expedition, the 43rd sending 250 of all ranks. On the 14th August the flotilla sailed up the river, being heavily shelled while passing Fort Jacques-Cartier, but suffering very little damage, and on the 7th September a landing was effected about ten miles below Montreal. On the same day a small force from Quebec, after a running fight with the enemy, arrived before Jacques-Cartier, which capitulated forthwith. General Amherst, now hearing that the two other forces co-operating with him were within striking distance of the other sides of the town, immediately advanced on Montreal, and the French, finding themselves completely surrounded, gave in without firing a shot. Articles of capitulation were at once signed, France ceded to England all her Canadian possessions, and the war in this part of the world was thus happily and unexpectedly brought to a close.

For these services, the Regiment was permitted to inscribe on its Colours the "Battle Honour" QUEBEC, 1759, though the permission was not granted until 1882.

CHAPTER II.

THE WEST INDIES, 1761—1763.

England against France and Spain.

WHENEVER England was at war with her European neighbours, the isolated West India Islands, then in the hands principally of England, France, and Spain, became the objective of naval expeditions, and, having small garrisons, usually fell an easy prey to whichever party attacked them. In 1761 the more important of these islands were held as follows :—*England*, Barbados, St. Christopher (or St. Kitts), Antigua, Jamaica, Guadalupe, The Bahamas; *France*, Hayti, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada, Dominica, Tobago; *Spain*, Cuba, Trinidad, Porto-Rico.

England was busily engaged in this quarter of the globe in 1759, but withdrew her forces to supplement the army destined for the conquest of North America (Canada); when this had been successfully accomplished, she returned to the charge, and made a descent on the French possessions in the West Indies. The expedition was under the command of General Monckton, and rendezvoused at the end of the year at the Island of Barbados, whither the 43rd had sailed from New York in November, 1761. MARTINIQUE was the first island to be attacked, and on the 7th January, 1762, the British landed in the creek of Cas Navire. The country was difficult, and the enemy had erected batteries and fortifications at every turn. The fortified town of Port Royale was made for, and its capture proved no easy task, for it was protected by strong outworks situated on Morne Tortenson and Morne Garnier. It was decided to assault Morne Tortenson first, and the light companies were

ordered to make a flank attack on the left, while the remainder of the force pushed forward under the fire of the enemy's batteries. The French made a gallant defence, but the British troops were irresistible, and they carried each successive position, until eventually Morne Tortenson was in our hands. Then the enemy took refuge in the higher works of Morne Garnier, from which he could fire into Morne Tortenson. To capture the upper work was now absolutely necessary, but its situation was of such strength that no attempt could be made on it for several days. At length the arrangements were complete, and, by good fortune, the French played into our hands. Had they been content to trust to their defences, it is doubtful if Morne Garnier would ever have been carried, but as our advanced troops crept forward the enemy issued from his position and launched a counter-attack with all his forces. In a short time the fight became general, but it was not long before the fierceness of the British attack caused the French to give way, and they were soon flying up the slope in the endeavour to get back to their position. With deafening shouts our men pursued, overtook the enemy, dashed through his ranks, and even succeeded in reaching the batteries first. A moment later Morne Garnier was in our hands, and the French guns were being served by the British. Thoroughly beaten, the enemy fled pell-mell into the town, the surrender of which followed within a very few days.

St. Pierre, the capital of Martinique, still held out, but as soon as he heard that Port Royale had fallen, the French commander proposed terms for the capitulation of the whole island. These were eventually agreed on; and with the surrender of MARTINIQUE came also that of the neighbouring French possessions, viz.;—GRENADA, ST. LUCIA, and ST. VINCENT. The cost to the British was not excessive, for the casualties were remarkably light, and as far as the 43rd was concerned there were only two men killed, and three officers and six men wounded.

EXPEDITION TO HAVANNAH.

A few months after the reduction of Martinique, news arrived of the declaration of war with Spain, and the despatch of an expedition from England to operate against the Spanish West Indies. Of these Cuba was the most flourishing possession, and Havannah, the capital, the most important town. Thirty-seven men of war and one hundred and fifty transports brought the expedition of 10,000 men to the West Indies, the 43rd (with other troops from Martinique), joining, on the 7th May, 1762, off Cape-Nicholas. The fleet at once sailed for HAVANNAH, where the Spanish fleet was found lying in the harbour, the entrance to which was defended by forts, and a strong boom with sunken ships behind. The British admiral hoped for a naval engagement, but the Spanish fleet was not to be drawn out of its safe berth in the harbour, and it was the evident intention of the Spaniards to trust entirely to their land defences. On the 7th June operations commenced ; part of the fleet sailed to the westward, in order to deceive the enemy, while at the same time a landing was effected in an easterly direction. The army now advanced in two columns, for the assault of Guarda Vacoa and the MORO respectively, while a small detachment took up a position between Havannah and the interior. The 43rd took part in the attack on the Moro ; guns were brought up with the greatest difficulty, and batteries and entrenchments thrown up opposite the fort ; heavy firing continuing for several days. On the 29th June the enemy made a sortie, but was driven back with the loss of some 300 men. Then three of our ships commenced a fierce bombardment of the fort, but the guns of the Moro replied with such effect that in a few days the ships were forced to retire out of range. A week later our principal land battery was completely destroyed by fire, and before long the climate began to tell so severely on the troops that more than half the force was unfit for duty. This, however, only spurred the remainder to greater exertions ; new batteries were

erected, and the fort was plied with shot and shell, until, by the 20th July, the guns of the Moro were silenced, the upper works destroyed, and a lodgment effected in the covered way.

But the Spaniards even yet had no intention of giving in, knowing full well that the strength of the fortress, though portions of the works were much battered, still defied the assault of ordinary troops, and they were aware of the extent to which disease had decimated our ranks. Reinforcements, however, presently arrived from New York, and with siege material brought from Jamaica, the British force was able to complete the advantages already gained. An assault was considered impracticable, for it was discovered that the Moro was surrounded by a ditch or escarpment cut in the natural rock—some eighty feet deep and forty feet wide. The miners were now set to work, and a regular siege commenced. While the mining was in progress one attempt was made to relieve the fortress by a party of 1,200 Spaniards from Havannah. Climbing the hill, they engaged our posts with desperate valour, only, however, to be repulsed with immense loss.

At the end of July the mining operations were completed, and on the 30th one of the principal bastions was blown to pieces. Through the narrow breach thus made the storming party rushed, and the bulk of the enemy, hesitating but a moment, gave way and fled. The Governor, with his deputy and a hundred men, formed round the colours and refused to surrender, the two officers and a considerable number of the gallant men being shot down before the affair was over. It had taken fifty-three days to capture the Moro, and much blood had been shed on both sides, but its fall decided the fate of Havannah, which was now practically at the mercy of the British batteries, erected on the newly-acquired eminence.

Early in August more reinforcements arrived from North America, and Lord Albemarle, before bombarding the town, invited the governor to surrender. The governor promptly but politely refused, and emphasized his refusal by opening

fire forthwith. A salvo of artillery from every British gun was the reply, resulting in the silencing of the enemy's batteries and the hoisting of flags of truce. Havannah capitulated, the garrison marching out with honours of war, and being shipped off at once for Spain. The loot taken on this occasion amounted to more than £3,000,000 sterling, which was (as was customary in those days) divided among the troops according to rank. The losses had been severe, *viz.* :—killed and died of disease, 54 officers, 1,014 men; wounded, 19 officers and 631 men. Of the 43rd (which numbered 380 men), 27 men succumbed to wounds and disease, and one officer and 15 men were wounded.

For these services the Regiment was permitted, in 1909, to add to the battle honours on its Colours “Martinique, 1762,” and “Havannah.”

Before closing this chapter, it may be of interest to say what became of the West India Islands on the declaration of peace in 1763. Of those which the 43rd had helped to conquer on this occasion, *viz.* :—*from France*, Martinique, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent; and *from Spain*, Cuba (Havannah); Martinique and St. Lucia were restored to France, and Cuba to Spain; while Grenada and St. Vincent remained British possessions. Two of the other islands enumerated at the beginning of this chapter were, by the peace of 1763, re-distributed as follows:—Guadalupe to France, and Tobago to England.

CHAPTER III.

THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, 1774—1782.

England against her American Colonies and subsequently against France.

IT is strange to think that what are now the United States of America should have been less than a century and a half ago a British Colony, and it is certainly unpleasant to relate how the colony was lost for ever ; still unpleasant or not, it is a matter of history, and that America gained her independence was no fault of the Regiment, both battalions of which fought nobly to uphold the honour of the mother-country. The one drop of comfort in the cup of bitterness is perhaps the knowledge that the great American nation of to-day is the outcome of British enterprise in the past, and that, whatever small differences may arise, the fact will always remain that England and America are knit together by blood ties, which no amount of political blundering can ever completely sever. That the war with which this chapter is concerned was brought about at all was due entirely to what nowadays would be described as want of common sense—absolute want of foresight, and absolute ignorance of existing conditions. To put the matter briefly, the trouble with the American Colonies arose on the question of taxation. The British Government had granted to the East India Company the right to import into England their tea free of duty ; tea therefore was comparatively cheap, but as America took a considerable quantity of it, the Chancellor of the Exchequer deemed it an excellent opportunity for extracting money from these Colonies, and imposed a small duty on all tea imported into America. This the Americans immediately

resented, holding that, as British subjects, they were entitled to get their tea free of duty, and when the vessels laden with tea arrived at Boston, they were boarded by the inhabitants and the cargo thrown overboard. This was treated in England as open rebellion, and the government forthwith closed the port of Boston to British shipping, an act which so incensed the colonists that in a very short space of time all the provinces decided to uphold the Bostonians, to boycott British trade, and to strike for liberty. They assumed the appellation of the "United States of America," and set to work to raise an army, and to gather together munitions of war. For a time it was hoped that the dispute between the mother-country and the Colonies would blow over, but public opinion in England demanded that the rebellious colonists should be coerced, and in the summer of 1774 reinforcements were sent across the Atlantic. The first regiment to reach Boston from England was the 43rd, and among the other regiments that there joined General Gage's army was the 52nd, which came down in October by sea from Canada. In this camp at Boston, therefore, the two regiments (a century later to be made one) first met.

Nothing occurred to provoke hostilities during the winter, but in the spring of 1775 General Gage determined to destroy certain military stores which, he had been informed, the Americans were collecting at Concord, eighteen miles from Boston, and with this object the flank companies of the 43rd, 52nd, and other regiments proceeded on the evening of the 18th April towards Concord. The Americans, who had spies everywhere, received intimation of the proposed raid, and were ready to deal with it.

THE COMBAT OF LEXINGTON.

The advance on Concord was made during the night, the troops being conveyed in boats to the Cambridge River, and landing at Phipps Farm. The march then commenced, and at daybreak of the 19th April the village of LEXINGTON was

reached. Here a party of American militia was found to be drawn up on the grass, to oppose the British column, and on being ordered to disperse, they at once opened fire on the King's troops, who replied with considerable effect, killing and wounding sixteen of the rebels. The Light Company of the 43rd under Captain Laurie and Lieutenant Hull was now left to guard the bridge (the principal approach to the town), while the remainder of the force went on to Concord and destroyed the stores. This accomplished, the expedition commenced the return march, but the Americans had taken up positions in rear, in order to cut off the retreat, and soon opened a heavy fire from behind cover. They had seized the bridge, overpowering its defenders, capturing seven men, and mortally wounding Lieutenant Hull and others. The soldiers, seeing the predicament, fought with desperation, and before reaching Lexington their ammunition began to give out, and they themselves to become exhausted. The losses were heavy, and the Americans were sure of their victory, when fortunately there arrived on the scene a reinforcement of twelve companies and some guns, despatched by General Gage in the nick of time. This decided the day, and the retirement was speedily continued to Charlestown, whence the party was taken in boats to Boston. One officer, and 64 men had been killed, and 15 officers and 165 men wounded; the 43rd casualties amounting to one officer and 55 men killed, and 5 men wounded; those of the 52nd, 3 men killed, and 2 wounded. Reviewing these events after a lapse of many years, there is no doubt that the operations, though successful in accomplishing what was required, induced the Americans to believe that they had gained a great victory, and had driven the British back to their camp. They consequently made up their minds to rid the country altogether of the King's troops; and the militia, to the number of 20,000, soon surrounded Boston, refusing General Gage's offer of pardon if they would lay down their arms and go to their homes. Both sides prepared for hostilities, and on the 16th June 1775 the Americans began



BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL, 17th June, 1775
Final Assault by the Grenadier Company of the 52nd Regiment.

to throw up entrenchments near Bunker (or Bunker's) Hill, overlooking Charlestown. They were immediately bombarded by the British men-of-war, and on the following day, a force consisting of 20 of the flank companies, with the 5th, 38th, 43rd, and 52nd Regiments, and some field guns crossed over from Boston in boats, and formed up to assault the entrenchments.

BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.

It was about noon when the landing was effected, and the advance then began in three lines, the flank companies leading on the right and left, the 5th and 38th in the centre (slightly in rear), and the 43rd and 52nd in the third line. The Americans were occupying Charlestown Heights (Breed's Hill) with their right in the houses of Charlestown, and their left in a strong breastwork or redoubt. The town was soon set on fire by the guns of our fleet, while the flank companies pushed forward, under a heavy artillery fire, against the neighbouring works. The enemy, holding doggedly to the entrenchments until the British troops were within close range, opened a murderous fire, which caused great havoc in the ranks. Almost the whole of the first line was mown down, but nothing daunted the remainder dashed forward and finally drove the enemy from the works with a brilliant bayonet charge. The breastworks extending from Bunker Hill to the Mystic River were carried in succession, and the fall of the redoubt followed, when the British occupied the peninsula, and immediately set to work to fortify the Heights. The battle had been of the most sanguinary description ; what the enemy lost it is impossible to say, but the casualties on our side (out of the total of 2,100 men who went into action) amounted to 19 officers and 207 men killed, and 70 officers and 758 men wounded. And of these killed and wounded no fewer than 4 officers and 94 men belonged to the 43rd, and 11 officers and 101 men belonged to the 52nd, whose Grenadier Company came out of action with only eight sound men.



GRENADIER, 52ND REGIMENT.
War of American Independence.

Small wonder that the Americans, although put to the rout, considered that they had had the best of the fight, for they had placed *hors de combat* more than half the force that attacked them.

General Washington was now appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Americans, whose number under arms soon rose to 200,000, and the British at Charlestown and Boston were rapidly blockaded, and remained throughout the winter cut off from the mainland, forced to endure considerable hardships and every species of annoyance short of actual fighting, and too weak to attempt to disperse the besiegers. All supplies—even firewood—had to be brought from England in sailing vessels, which frequently miscarried by reason of storms, and the only consolation that the troops had was the fact that the winter was an abnormally mild one.

Early in March, 1776, the Americans made active preparations for reducing Boston, and, having strongly fortified the neighbouring heights, commenced a bombardment. This caused the British General to decide that, as there was no object in holding an isolated port like Boston, and as the sea was still open to him, it would be wiser to withdraw his troops altogether. Accordingly, on the 17th March, the whole British garrison embarked without opposition, and sailed for Halifax (Nova Scotia), the Americans occupying Boston the same day. Again, this was naturally considered an American victory, and as it was impossible to warn ships that Boston had been evacuated, several British vessels ran into the harbour and were captured.

At Halifax the 43rd, 52nd and other regiments remained until the 12th June, when an expedition started for Staten Island, to take part in the attack on New York. Considerable reinforcements had in the meantime arrived from England and other parts, and on the 4th July the Americans issued their *Declaration of Independence*. But England had not yet abandoned all hope of saving her colonies, and in August active operations commenced with the attack on

LONG ISLAND. A landing was duly effected, and the American entrenchments at BROOKLYN were, on the 27th August, assaulted and carried, with a loss to the defenders of upwards of 3,000 men, the British losing barely 350. As a result of this hard-fought action, the enemy evacuated New York, and a British garrison took possession of the town. The next engagement of importance was at WHITE PLAINS on the 28th October, when Washington's army was defeated ; after which the British attacked FORTS WASHINGTON and LEE, on the Hudson River (16th November), and NEW YORK ISLAND (20th November), from all of which the Americans were driven with considerable loss. RHODE ISLAND (the American Naval Station) was next attacked and captured, and this succession of British victories (in which the 43rd and 52nd had taken part) induced the belief that the war would soon end—and favourably for England.

With the opening of 1777 came a turn of the tide, for Washington succeeded in surprising Trenton (on the Delaware) and capturing the garrison of 1,000 Hessians (British mercenaries), though he retired directly reinforcements—including the 43rd—were reported to be approaching. After this nothing worthy of notice occurred until the 11th September, when the opposing armies met, and fought, at BRANDYWINE RIVER, a battle which resulted in the rout of the Americans, who lost 1,300, killed, wounded, and prisoners, besides 11 field guns, the casualties on our side amounting to about 550. The attack was delivered in two columns, the grenadiers at the head of one, and the light infantry at the head of the other. Before starting Colonel Meadows, addressing the grenadiers, said : "Grenadiers, put on your caps ; for d—d fighting and drinking I'll match you against the world." The enemy commenced the action by opening fire from his guns on the columns deploying into line, and the fight that ensued was at very close quarters—within 150 yards. The British now occupied Philadelphia, and the Americans encamped in the woods near GERMANTOWN, out of which they were

driven on the 20th September by a brilliant night attack. As the Light Company of the 52nd played the most conspicuous part in this affair, it will be interesting to describe what took place.

Soon after dark, the troops detailed for the enterprise, got under arms, and were told that they were to attempt the surprise of the American camp, that no shots were to be fired, but that everything was to be done with "cold steel." Eventually the edge of the wood surrounding the enemy's camp was reached, when the piquets challenged, fired a volley, and retired. The British General at once gave the command : "Dash, Light Infantry," when with a yell the troops rushed into the wood, and were soon busy with their bayonets, having actually entered the camp before half the defenders had discovered the attack. The wildest confusion followed, the Americans escaping, with or without their arms, as best they could ; the camp was immediately set on fire, and the pursuit taken up. It was a short fight, but a bloody one, and was remembered by the enemy for many a long day, the Light Infantry from their conduct on that night being ever afterwards called by the Americans "The Bloodhounds." The Americans lost 300 killed and wounded, numerous prisoners, and a great quantity of arms and baggage, while the British loss was insignificant.

Part of the army was now engaged at the siege of Mud Island, while the remainder were holding positions round Philadelphia—at Biggarstown and the neighbourhood. Here, on the 4th October, General Washington made a desperate attempt to retrieve his recent disasters, and, by bringing up his whole force, completely overpowered and drove in the British, but was cheated of a brilliant victory by the timely arrival of British reinforcements, not, however, before we had lost some 550 men. The enemy fell back to Chestnut Hill ; and Mud Island and Red Bank were soon in our possession, when a chain of works were thrown up from the Delaware River to the Schuylkill, for the protection of Philadelphia.

Nothing further occurred in 1777, and both armies went

into winter quarters and remained inactive for several months. With the resumption of operations in 1778 a change had come over the situation, France having thrown in her lot with the Americans, in the hope principally of recovering her lost possessions in Canada, and though in this she did not succeed, her co-operation with the Americans undoubtedly decided the fate of the colonies, and gained for them their Independence. In June the British general decided to concentrate on New York, and Philadelphia was evacuated—an operation attended by very considerable difficulties, as the march to New York was harassed by General Washington's army. The Grenadier Company of the 52nd suffered severely, chiefly at FREEHOLD, where its captain (John Powell) was killed. He was the fourth captain that the Company had lost in America, and a drummer of the Company was heard to exclaim : " Well, I wonder who they'll get to accept our grenadier company now? I'll be d—d if I would! "

With the exception of the surprise and capture of Lady Washington's Dragoons in the Jerseys, the 52nd was not again engaged during the war. Sixteen years of service in America had reduced the strength of the regiment to such an extent that towards the end of 1778, the few men fit for service were transferred to other corps and the officers and the skeleton of the 52nd embarked at New York for England.

The 43rd remained in garrison at Rhode Island, and, with some 6,000 other British troops, was engaged during the summer of 1778 in protecting it from the constant attack of the Americans. Several smart skirmishes took place, and in the month of September the enemy was handled so roughly by the 22nd, 43rd, and detachments of other regiments, that he was driven off altogether, and left the garrison in peace for a whole year. In the autumn of 1779 it was discovered that the Americans were planning a combined attack by sea and land on New York, and it was decided to evacuate Rhode Island, so as to increase the garrison of New York. Nothing, however, came of the

threatened attack on New York, though the 43rd was quartered there throughout 1780 and until May 1781. In the meanwhile, the flank companies of the regiment were employed at the siege of Charlestown, and Lord Cornwallis was carrying on a lively campaign in Virginia.

In the spring of 1781 the British forces in Virginia required reinforcing, and two regiments—of which the 43rd was one—were despatched from New York, up the James River, and joined Cornwallis' army at Meades. On the 6th June the enemy was encountered at JAMES TOWN, and after a smart action was dispersed, with the loss of many guns and 300 killed and wounded. The British General crossed the river, in order to follow up his victory, but he was peremptorily ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to desist from pursuit, and to establish himself in a defensive post. York Town and Gloucester were accordingly occupied and placed in a state of defence, which was the one thing that the enemy desired, as, with the co-operation of the French fleet, the American generals imagined that York Town would be easily reduced. Rumours of an attack on New York were diligently spread, in order to stop reinforcements being despatched thence to York Town; American troops were openly marched south, as if moving on New York; but, all the while, the enemy gradually drew nearer to his goal, and by the 1st September York Town was completely surrounded. What followed is a pitiful story, and forms one of the few black pages in British military history.

SIEGE AND SURRENDER OF YORK TOWN.

The position held by the British consisted, as has already been said, of the villages of York Town and Gloucester, the former situated on a peninsula between the York River and the James, the latter on an opposite spit of land. The bulk of the army occupied the high ground above York Town, while some 700 men garrisoned Gloucester. Cornwallis, seeing that the Americans meant business, but

having been informed that reinforcements were on the way, deemed it advisable to hold on to Gloucester Point, but at the same time to shorten the line of defence round York Town by drawing in closer to the town. The outer works were abandoned and at once occupied by the enemy, who now hemmed in the British force, and, with 2,000 men, also invested Gloucester. From this time until the middle of October, the French and Americans carried on a regular siege and bombardment of York Town, stormed and captured two redoubts in front, and constructed their second parallel within 300 yards of the town. Desperate sorties were made by the garrison, resulting in severe losses to both sides, but the British in their confined space had to contend with the havoc played by disease, and when the time came to withstand the enemy's assault Lord Cornwallis considered that, with his reduced numbers, and with his ammunition almost exhausted, it would be possible to offer but a feeble resistance. He had long given up all hope of receiving reinforcements from New York ; his 5,000 men (the greater portion of whom were unfit for duty) were surrounded by 13,000 Americans and 9,000 French ; and further defence could have been of no avail. York Town together with Gloucester capitulated on the 19th October 1781, and Lord Cornwallis with the remnant of his force were marched out prisoners of war. The strength of the 43rd at the commencement of the siege was 292 men ; on the day of the surrender only 94 were fit for duty, 168 being in hospital sick and wounded, and the remainder having died or been killed.

So far as the 43rd and 52nd were concerned this American war had been most disastrous ; the 52nd had been practically wiped out, and the remnant sent home ; while the few men left of the 43rd closed their American service as prisoners of war. Such they remained until the end of 1782 when peace was concluded, and early in 1783 they returned to England. The surrender of York Town in reality decided the struggle, for though the war dragged on, no engagement of importance took place, and by the articles of peace England lost America for ever.

CHAPTER IV.

SOUTHERN INDIA, 1783—1796.

War with Tippoo Sahib, 1783—1792. Capture of Pondicherry from the French, 1793. Capture of Ceylon from the Dutch, 1795—1796.

THE 52nd, as we have seen, had already had its baptism of fighting in America, and in 1783 the Regiment, once more recruited up to strength, proceeded to India, which was at that time being gradually conquered and brought under British rule. In the south the notorious TIPPOO, SULTAN OF MYSORE, had just succeeded his soldier-father, Hyder Ali, and not only was he determined to resist invasion, but he was even ambitious enough to propose a vast extension of his dominions. His army was by no means to be despised, being well-trained and well-disciplined, and quite capable of holding its own against any enemy it was likely to encounter, for the British force in that part of the country was of no great strength.

Hostilities had already commenced when the 52nd landed at Madras, and within a few months half the Regiment joined the force under General Norman McLeod destined for the reduction of CANNANORE, whose queen (one of Tippoo's allies) had seized 200 British sepoys shipwrecked off her coast. Like all the large towns of Southern India, Cannanore was strongly fortified, and the principal fort had to be carried by assault. Owing to the heavy fire kept up by the defenders, it was difficult to discover the true nature of the defences ; a ditch could be seen in front of the wall, but whether it was wet or dry was unknown ; it was therefore necessary to obtain this information before the artillery commenced to breach the wall preparatory to



OFFICER, 52ND REGIMENT.
Mysore War.

an assault. The General offered a reward to any soldier who would reconnoitre the ditch and bring satisfactory information. No sooner was this made known than a man of the 52nd named ROWLANDSON TAYLOR stepped forward and volunteered for the task, and, though heavily fired on, managed to reach the ditch, ascertain its depth and the amount of water it contained, and return to receive the General's approbation and a reward of fifty guineas. A breach was soon made in the wall, and that night the fort was stormed and carried after a stout resistance, the 52nd alone losing 4 officers and 53 men killed and wounded. Then ensued a series of fights for the minor forts, but in the morning (15th December 1783) the queen and all her followers surrendered, and the town was forthwith occupied.

In March 1784 peace was concluded with Tippoo Sahib, but towards the close of 1789 hostilities were resumed. In December of that year Tippoo violated his treaty and made an unprovoked attack on Travancore, whose Rajah was a British ally. A British force, under Major-General Thomas Musgrave, was soon placed in the field, but it was not until July 1790 that operations actually commenced. General Medows now assumed the supreme command, and the 52nd (under Major MARTIN HUNTER) formed part of the 1st Brigade, destined for the invasion of the Coimbatore District. After capturing Dirampuram and Coimbatore without much opposition, a division proceeded to reduce the important fortress of DINDIGUL, which was invested on the 17th August. The 52nd was engaged in the siege from that date until the 21st August, on the night of which the fort was stormed. The two flank companies of the 52nd led the assault, but the immense difficulty in scaling the rocky surroundings of the place in the dark rendered the task impossible, and the night attack failed, only, however, to be resumed at daylight, when Dindigul fell into our hands. On this occasion the 52nd lost 4 killed and 16 wounded.

From Dindigul the division marched on PAULIGHAT-CHERRY, which fortress was invested on the 10th September

and withstood a siege of twelve days, when it was surrendered at the moment that the British troops were moving to the assault. The losses in the 52nd were one sergeant killed, and one officer and three men wounded.

After these events, the Regiment was kept marching and countermarching in the pursuit of Tippoo for several months, and finally came up with him in the neighbourhood of BANGALORE early in March 1791. Tippoo was well provided with cavalry and artillery, but so determined were the British to crush him that Lord Cornwallis, the Commander-in-Chief, had by this time taken the field in person. Bangalore was duly besieged, and an attempt was made to reduce the fortress by a heavy cannonade, which, however, was so ably replied to by the enemy that it was not until the siege had been carried on for a week that the walls were sufficiently breached for an assault. On the night of the 21st March the fortress was stormed, and, after considerable hand-to-hand fighting, captured. The storming party consisted of a Forlorn Hope of 30 picked men, under LIEUTENANT JOHN EVANS of the 52nd, and the Grenadier and Light Companies of the 36th, 52nd, 71st, 72nd, 74th, and 76th Regiments. The General Order published by Lord Cornwallis on the following day congratulated the troops on their good work, which he considered to be "a conspicuous proof that disciplined valour in soldiers, when directed by zeal and capacity in officers, is irresistible." The 52nd casualties during the siege and assault were 1 officer and 4 men killed, and 2 officers and 3 men wounded.

An advance was now made on the fortress of SERINGAPATAM, and on the 15th May 1791 the enemy was driven from his position in front of Seringapatam, after a sharp engagement in which the 52nd lost one officer and two men killed, and 20 wounded. Owing to the rainy season having set in, the idea of besieging the fortress had to be, for the time being, abandoned, and the army returned to Bangalore. On the 18th October, after taking part in sundry minor engagements, the 52nd and the rest of the army made a

successful assault on the hill-fort of NUNDYDROOG, and on the 10th December arrived before SAVENDROOG, a mountain fortress, situated on the summit of precipitous cliffs, and considered almost impregnable. The place was quickly surrounded, and after breaches had been effected by our batteries, a general assault was, on the 21st December, delivered from all sides, the men swarming up the bare faces of the cliffs, and rushing into the breach while the 52nd band played "*Britons, Strike Home!*" So astonished were the defenders at the cool daring of the assailants that they offered but a feeble resistance, and the casualties on our side were only five men wounded. OUTREDROOG was, two days later, carried by escalade by the 52nd and 72nd, and in the following month a general advance was made on SERINGAPATAM.

Tippoo had in the meantime concentrated his forces at the latter place, and it was well-known that he intended to fight to a finish. Seringapatam was situated on an island in the great river Cauvery, with fortified camping grounds on the north and south sides of the river. In addition to the actual fortress, there were six large redoubts, and no fewer than 100 pieces of cannon were in position to open on the assailants. On the 5th February 1792, Lord Cornwallis's army arrived within range of the guns, and orders were immediately issued for an assault on the following night. The British force was formed in three columns of attack, the 36th and 76th regiments forming the right column, and the 72nd Highlanders the left, while the centre column (under the personal command of the Commander-in-Chief) consisted of the 52nd, 71st, and 74th. In addition to these regiments there were native troops with each column, and the flank companies of the British regiments were ordered to lead the assault.

At eight p.m. the flankers pushed forward, and, surprising the enemy's first line, broke through it, and crossed the northern branch of the river at the foot of the glacis of the fortress. A moment more and they would have rushed it, but the defenders were now on the alert, and saved them-

selves by raising the drawbridge. The flankers found that they were now in the unenviable position of being close under the guns of the fortress, and assailed on all sides by the vast bodies of the enemy who had been in positions outside the fortress. Desperate hand to hand fighting ensued in the darkness and continued until daybreak, the 52nd, 71st, and 72nd forcing their way at the point of the bayonet across the river to the island. There they were subjected to a heavy cannonade from the fortress, and, finding it impossible to advance further, Major Martin Hunter, who commanded the 52nd, decided to re-cross the river and endeavour to join Lord Cornwallis and the reserve, near the Sultan Redoubt. This retirement was successfully carried out, and, as it proved, was most fortunate, for Tippoo's whole army had crossed the river at another point, and was delivering a counter-attack on Lord Cornwallis's little reserve. The enemy advanced under cover of the darkness, and poured in a volley before his actual presence was known. They were within 200 yards, when the 52nd fired a volley and charged. This stayed the enemy's onslaught for the time, though at the cost of the lives of many of the 52nd, Major Hunter himself being dangerously wounded at the head of the regiment.

While this was going on Lord Cornwallis and his small body-guard had fallen back, and the 52nd soon received instructions to disengage and follow. On receiving the order to retreat the men expressed their disgust at not being allowed another charge, and so vehemently that Captain Conran (who had assumed command when Major Hunter was wounded) called out "*Well, my lads, though I have received orders to retreat, you shall have another dash at them.*" The charge was a brilliant success, and resulted in Tippoo drawing off his forces from this part of the field, and directing his attentions to the attack on Sybald's Redoubt, which had been captured by the troops of another of our columns.

Gradually were Tippoo's attacks repulsed on all sides, and when day broke the enemy had retreated within the

walls of the fortress of Seringapatam. The casualties on both sides were heavy, the enemy's loss being estimated at 20,000 killed and wounded, while in the 52nd alone the casualties were 1 officer and 10 men killed, 5 officers and 27 men wounded, and 9 men missing. Eighty pieces of cannon were captured from the enemy's fortified camp, and the Commander-in-Chief had every reason to be proud of the achievements of the night. One thing remained to crown the success—the capture of the Fortress of Seringapatam, and with this object the place was invested on the 9th February. Batteries were thrown up and siege trenches constructed, but before the work was completed the troops had the mortification of hearing that peace had been signed, and that Seringapatam was to remain in Tippoo's hands.

The war was over. Let us sum up the results: the enemy had surrendered 70 fortresses and had lost some 800 pieces of cannon and 50,000 men; while by the treaty of peace, Tippoo agreed to pay a considerable war indemnity, and to cede almost half his dominions.

THE CAPTURE OF PONDICHERRY, 1793.

Before concluding its tour of foreign service, it fell to the lot of the 52nd to take part in two other expeditions. In 1793 France declared war against Great Britain and Holland, and as soon as the intelligence of this event reached India, it was decided to make a descent on the small French settlement of Pondicherry, situated on the south-east coast of India. The 52nd, then stationed at Poonamallee, near Madras, received orders to join the expeditionary force, and, early in August 1793, were taking part in the siege of the French settlement. Disaffection had, however, set in among the French garrison, and, after breaking into open mutiny, the troops forced the Governor to surrender the town on the 23rd August. The fortifications of the place were destroyed, and when the town was restored to the French, by the Treaty of Paris, it was stipulated that they should not be rebuilt, and that the French garrison should

never be stronger than what was required for police purposes.

THE CONQUEST OF CEYLON, 1795.

The second expedition in which the 52nd was fortunate enough to be engaged was that destined for the capture of the coast towns of Ceylon, which were at that time in the possession of the Dutch. In May 1795 Holland became the "Batavian Republic" and to all intents and purposes part and parcel of France, with whom England was then at war, and as soon as this was known in India, an expedition was fitted out to drive the Dutch out of Ceylon. Operations commenced on the 1st August, and continued until the following February, during which time the forts of Trincomalee, Batticaloo, Manaar, and Colombo all surrendered after short sieges and without the necessity of having recourse to assault. By the spring of 1796 the seaboard of Ceylon was in our hands, though the island was not formally ceded to Great Britain until the treaty of peace was signed at Amiens in 1802, and the natives of the interior were not conquered until 1815.

For the services mentioned in this chapter the 52nd was authorised, in 1821, to bear on its colours "HINDOOSTAN," and, in 1889, the word "MYSORE"—honours as in the case of "QUEBEC," somewhat tardily bestowed by the Home authorities, though the Madras Government had issued a special order, on the departure of the Regiment for England in 1798, thanking all ranks "for the share they have had in supporting its authority during a period of 15 years, and in extending the conquests of the nation in the late glorious war against Tippoo Sultan."

CHAPTER V.

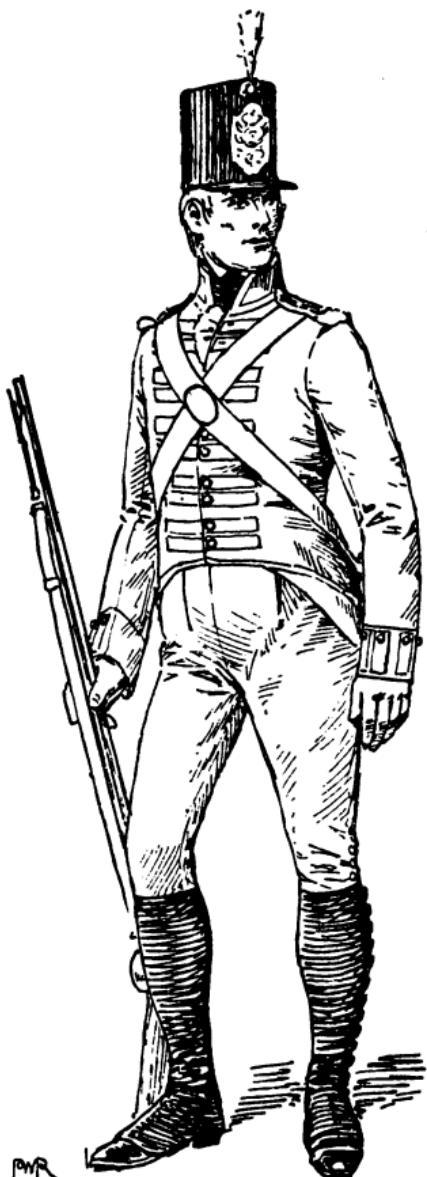
MINOR EXPEDITIONS, 1794—1807.

West Indies, 1794—1800 (war with France); Ferrol, 1800 (war with Spain); Copenhagen, 1807 (war with Denmark).

WEST INDIES, 1794—1800.

WHILE the events related in the latter part of the last chapter were in progress in India (or, as it was then called, the *East Indies*) England was again busy hammering at the French in the *West Indies*, and the 43rd proceeded, in January 1794, to Barbados, to take part in the proposed attacks on Martinique, Guadalupe, and St. Lucia, all of which were then French possessions.

On the 3rd February 1794 the force, consisting of a detachment of dragoons, and some sixteen infantry regiments, sailed from Barbados, and on the 5th effected a landing at MARTINIQUE. The numerous strong forts opened a heavy fire, and no advance could be made until the 8th, when one brigade landed at some little distance, and succeeded in reaching the mountains in rear of the forts. A gradual forward movement was then made, and on the 12th it was discovered that the French had evacuated some of their forts, whereupon Colonel Myers, with the 43rd and five grenadier companies of various regiments, seized all the defenders' batteries, and the enemy was very soon driven out of the five redoubts which filled the interval between Cas Navire and Fort Royal. On the 17th General Dundas with a force of soldiers and sailors landed and captured



PRIVATE, 43RD REGIMENT.
1803.

St. Pierre without any resistance being offered by the enemy, who now withdrew to Forts Louis and Bourbon. For a month the French withstood a siege, but on the 22nd March capitulated, and were allowed to march out of Fort Bourbon with colours flying and honours of war. They then surrendered their arms at Fort Royal, and were immediately shipped off to France. Among the spoils of war were five stands of colours and two French flags of the Fort, all of which were despatched to England for presentation to the King, who himself laid them up in St. Paul's Cathedral. Two officers of the 43rd (Captain Fenton and Lieutenant Crofton) were killed in the operations, and two officers were severely wounded. Of these one was Captain John Burnet, who, while leading his company, was blown into the air by the explosion of a mine; he came down, however, practically uninjured, though with his clothes on fire. The men nearest to him promptly tore off his burning garments, and he dashed on, almost naked, and quite blackened from the effects of the powder. He now had his arm shattered by a musket ball, and, while lying wounded, was mistaken by our own grenadiers for a French Black (mercenary) and bayoneted in several places. Yet, strange to say, he recovered, and ten years later was a colonel in the army. How many men the 43rd lost on this occasion is not recorded.

The second date "1794," after "Martinique, 1762," was authorized, in 1909, to be borne on the Colours of the Regiment for these services.

From Martinique the 43rd went with four other regiments to ST. LUCIA, which the French surrendered, on the 4th April 1794, almost without firing a shot. Then the expedition, leaving two regiments to garrison St. Lucia, continued its tour of conquest and captured GUADALOUPE at the point of the bayonet, after being subjected to a heavy fire from the guns of Fort Fleur d'Epée.

These victories, won with comparative ease, unfortunately produced in the minds of those in authority a disregard for precautions; they made the fatal mistakes of despising the

enemy and of putting faith in the newly-conquered inhabitants. As a consequence the garrison left in Guadaloupe was far too weak for the purpose, and, moreover, within a short time became decimated by disease. The French had doubtless been informed of this state of affairs, and in June launched an expedition of 2000 men to endeavour to recapture the island. LT.-COLONEL JAMES DRUMMOND, commanding the 43rd, held Fort Fleur d'Epée against the invaders, and repulsed two heavy assaults, but at the third assault was forced to beat a retreat. Meanwhile information had been sent to the General at Martinique, and reinforcements were sent to Guadaloupe. In July this force (four battalions) attempted to surprise the enemy at Point à Pitre, but, being led astray by the guides, suffered so severely that they were repulsed with considerable loss. Then to the surprise of everyone, Sir Charles Grey withdrew the reinforcements, abandoned the 43rd to their fate, and, leaving General Graham with headquarters at Berville, returned to Martinique. Thirteen officers of the Regiment died of disease, how many men can be guessed when it is known that, on the 1st September 1794, there were fit for duty 23, sick 176. The French now poured troops into Guadaloupe, and Colonel Drummond and his handful of men did all in their power to hold the batteries against them. Driven, at length, to Point Bacchus, Colonel Drummond and his detachment were surrounded by a force ten times their number, and compelled to surrender. General Graham at Berville found himself in a similar plight, and the only British troops who made good their escape composed the garrison of Fort Mathilde, who after holding out until their fort was a mass of ruins, slipped away in the dead of night and got on board the vessels lying close by, before the French had discovered what had happened.

Colonel Drummond and ten officers, together with the few remaining men of the Regiment, were kept as prisoners of war on board a hulk anchored off the island, but early in 1795 most of the officers succeeded in making their escape, by overpowering the guard and jumping into a boat which

was alongside. A few months later an exchange of prisoners took place, and the skeleton of the 43rd returned to England, where two years were spent in bringing the Regiment up to strength again. By March 1797 the 43rd had recovered, and in that month Colonel Drummond and 1000 men sailed for Martinique, though they were not given the opportunity of resuming operations against the French in the West Indies.

Little good had resulted from this West Indian struggle, for Guadaloupe remained a French possession, and Martinique was restored to France by the Treaty of Amiens, St. Lucia alone of the three becoming a British possession.

FERROL, 1800.

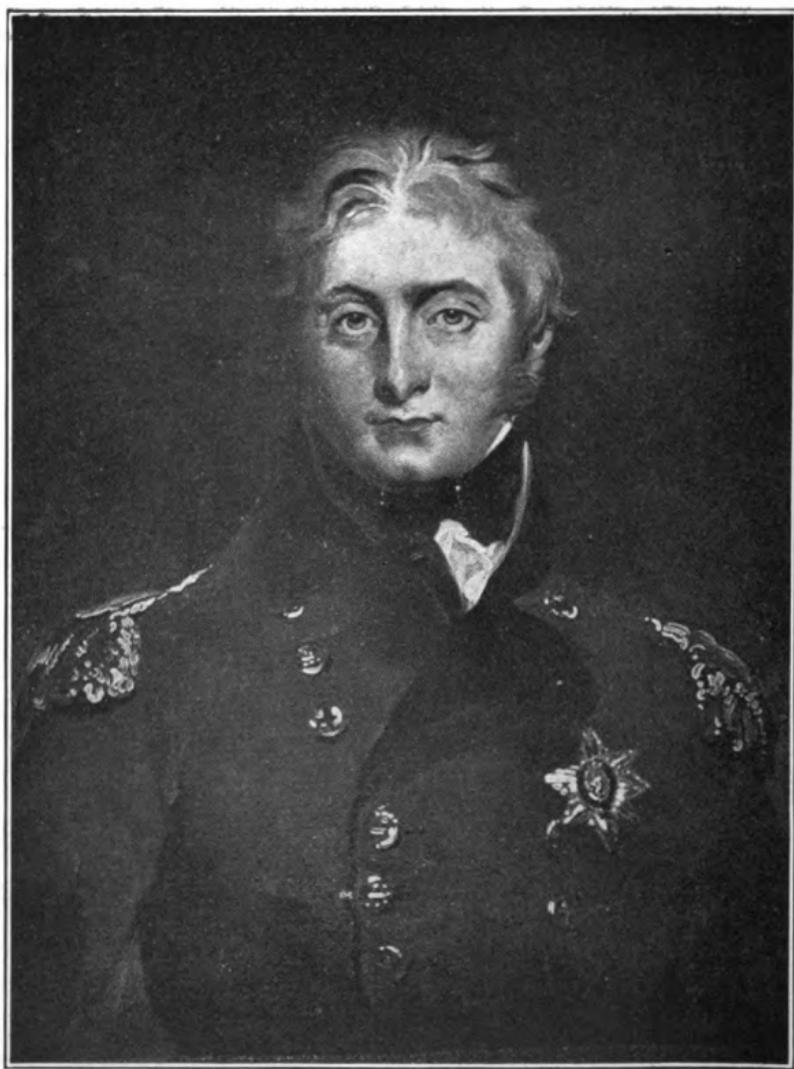
A second battalion had been added to the 52nd in 1799, and in the summer of 1800 both battalions (total strength 1800 men) left England with General Sir James Pulteney's expedition, landing near FERROL, on the coast of Spain, on the 25th August. On the following morning, an attack was made on the enemy's position, from which he was successfully driven, the 52nd losing 1 officer and 10 men killed, and 43 men wounded. On the 27th August, the Regiment was ordered to embark for the purpose of attacking Cadiz, but at the last moment the attack was abandoned, and the force proceeded to Gibraltar. Here Sir Ralph Abercromby was organizing his expedition for Egypt, but the men of the 52nd, to their great disgust, were informed that, as they had only enlisted for service in Europe, they could not be taken. They immediately volunteered for general service, but the expedition had to leave before this could be sanctioned by the home authorities, and the 52nd went in November to Lisbon, where the Regiment remained until the following January.

COPENHAGEN, 1807.

England was still at war with France, a state of things that had been going on, except for a break of fourteen months, since 1793, and as Denmark had thrown in her lot

with France, it was decided to despatch an expedition, consisting of forty-two men of war, and a land force under Lord Cathcart, to endeavour to capture the Danish fleet. With this expedition were both the 43rd and 52nd, as well as the 95th Rifles (afterwards the Rifle Brigade), and the troops landed on the island of Zealand, a few miles from Copenhagen, on the 16th August. Operations soon commenced, and the Danish army, occupying a strong position in front of the village of KIOGE, was put to the rout, with considerable loss. The British fleet at the same time engaged that of the enemy, and, on the 2nd September, COPENHAGEN was subjected to a vigorous bombardment, which lasted until the 7th, when the town capitulated, the Danes surrendering to Great Britain their fleet of sixty-three ships, all their stores, and some 2,500 heavy guns.

On the voyage to England with the spoils of war, the success of the expedition was almost marred by a heavy storm which overtook the victorious fleet. The transport carrying the 43rd struck a sandbank, and it was, for the moment, imagined that all on board would perish. Fortunately, however, the ship righted herself and continued her way in safety, but not before the officers and men of the Regiment had given themselves up for lost. Somewhat dramatically, one of the youngest officers appeared on deck with his flute, and, as everyone was expecting the transport to founder, struck up "The Dead March in Saul." This was Ensign Neale, who, later in life, after fighting in the Peninsular War, laid aside the sword, and took Holy Orders.



LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR JOHN MOORE, K.B.
Colonel-Commandant 52nd Light Infantry.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PENINSULAR WAR.

England, Portugal, and Spain against France.

CAMPAIGNS OF 1808—1809.

(See Map I.)

WITHOUT entering into the matter of politics, we may sum up in a few words the cause of this great war—and in no greater has the Regiment ever taken part. Napoleon, who had made himself practically master of all Europe, had long set his mind on the invasion of England, but he had so many irons in the fire that he was never able to pay serious attention to this item of his grand programme ; moreover, the destruction of his fleet at Trafalgar (1805) had upset all his calculations. But he made up his mind that, if he could not invade England, he would at any rate ruin her commerce, and he called on the weaker powers to close their ports to British trading vessels. Portugal refused and Spain hung back, whereupon Napoleon marched large armies into both countries, occupied Lisbon and Madrid without resistance, and even had the audacity to proclaim his brother, Joseph, king of Spain. This was the climax ; the people of Portugal, whose royal family had taken refuge in Brazil, threw in their lot with Spain ; and England decided to befriend the two powers and assist them in driving the invaders out of the country. How this was eventually effected remains to be told, and it is a long story.

THE BATTLE OF VIMIERA.

(21st August 1808).

The campaign of 1808 commenced with the despatch from Cork, in July, of a force of some 9,000 men, under SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY (afterwards the DUKE OF WELLINGTON), followed, a little later, by two more divisions, sailing respectively from Ramsgate and Harwich, under Generals Anstruther and Acland. With these reinforcements were the 43rd and 52nd (one battalion of each), and though Sir Arthur had already begun operations, the two regiments were in time to take part in the first general action of importance. The principal object of the campaign was to relieve Lisbon, and thus give confidence to the Portuguese. The British force landed at Mondego Bay, on the coast of Portugal, to the north of Lisbon, and were there joined by 4,000 more troops who had been brought up from Cadiz. On the 16th August, a combat took place at Obidos, and on the following day Wellesley engaged and defeated the French at Roleia. The enemy now retired south towards Lisbon, and Sir Arthur, hoping to be able to cut in between him and that place, directed his advance by a shorter and more westerly route than that taken by the French.

On the evening of the 19th August, the 43rd and 52nd, in Anstruther's Brigade, landed near Peniche, and the remainder of the two reinforcing divisions disembarked next day. With them was Sir Harry Burrard, who had been sent out from England to assume supreme command of the army, and, without landing, he ordered Wellesley to halt his force. The British accordingly took up a somewhat extended position near Vimiera (or Vimeiro), with the principal object of preventing interference with the disembarkation of the reinforcements, and early on the morning of the 21st, the enemy advanced to the attack.

The French general had intended to deliver the assault at daylight, and he marched from Torres Vedras on the

evening of the 20th August, but owing to the densely-wooded and broken nature of the country, the enemy did not arrive within striking distance until between nine and ten o'clock on the morning of the 21st. The position occupied by the British was situated on either side of the village, and in front of it the 43rd and 52nd were posted on a rugged, isolated height, commanding the country to the south and east. At midnight the enemy was reported to be advancing in strength, and as day dawned the French troops were despatched in the distance. Sir Arthur made some alterations in his dispositions, but so excellent was the cover afforded by the ground that the advance was quite concealed and could not be checked, until the enemy arrived almost within musket shot of the position.

A grand fight ensued, for the finest troops of the French army were engaged. The enemy's main column, preceded by skirmishers, flung itself against Anstruther's Brigade, whose advanced troops were immediately forced back behind the three companies of the 52nd posted to cover their retirement. Simultaneously another French column delivered an attack on Fane's Brigade, to whose assistance Anstruther despatched the 43rd. Both regiments, therefore, were soon in the thick of the fight and crossing bayonets with the enemy. As the French came to close quarters with Anstruther's Brigade, the 97th Regiment charged the head of the column, while the 52nd at the same time struck at its left flank. Taken thus in front and flank, the column recoiled, broke, and fled, with the British in hot pursuit. For a moment there was the risk of the pursuit being carried too far, but fortunately Lt.-Colonel Ross of the 52nd, grasping the situation, rallied the Regiment, and extended it, so as to be able to cover the retirement of the other regiments when the enemy's reinforcements were thrown in to check the rout.

Meanwhile, Fane's Brigade stood its ground, awaiting the assault of the left column. The British piquets were driven in, and the French, imagining that they had won the day, halted for a second, to recover themselves for the final

attack. The halt was fatal, for, before the advance was resumed, Fane's Brigade was let loose, and, with a wild shout, dashed at the enemy with their bayonets. At this moment the 43rd arrived on the scene, and most opportunely engaged the French right in some vineyards, where for a while a desperate hand-to-hand conflict took place. An idea of the fierceness of the struggle in this part of the field may be gained by two incidents that have been placed on record. Lieutenant Price, of the 52nd, was attacked by a French private, and fought him—sabre to bayonet. For some time Price succeeded in parrying the Frenchman's thrusts, but, at length, in stepping back to avoid a wild lunge, he lost his footing, and fell on his back. In a second the Frenchman was upon him, but Price, turning as the bayonet came plunging down at his chest, received it through two parts of his bent arm. With such force was the thrust delivered that the weapon securely pinned the arm to the ground. Both combatants were now powerless; Price could not move, and the Frenchman was afraid to withdraw his bayonet, lest his adversary should seize the opportunity to cut him down with his sabre, which was still firmly grasped in his hand. The two men glared savagely at each other, each cursing the other in his own language, for some minutes; then a sudden inspiration came to the Frenchman, and he commenced to use his boots, in the endeavour to kick the life out of his prostrate foe. At this critical moment a 52nd soldier luckily came to the rescue of his officer, and forthwith blew out the Frenchman's brains.

The other incident had a less fortunate ending. When the burial parties were at work after the battle, they found lying dead Sergeant-Armourer Patrick, of the 43rd, and a French soldier, still grasping their muskets with the bayonets driven through each body from breast to back.

Towards the close of the day the French made strenuous efforts to rally, but they were so severely handled all along the line, that they eventually drew off, and were soon in full retreat. That the British victory was not completed by

the pursuit and rout of the French was due to the extraordinary fact that while the battle was actually in progress Wellesley was superseded by Sir Harry Burrard, and the following day the latter was superseded by Sir Hew Dalrymple. Thus, within 24 hours, the British army in the field had three commanders-in-chief—each with his own ideas and plans.

At Vimiera the 43rd lost 6 officers and 113 men, the 52nd 2 officers and 38 men, killed and wounded.

The campaign in Portugal ended ten days later, when, by the Convention of Cintra, the French agreed to evacuate the country. It still remained, however, to clear them out of Spain, a task which, as we shall see, was not accomplished until some six years of hard-fought battles and sieges had passed.

The British now prepared to advance into Spain, and in the autumn, SIR JOHN MOORE, who was then at Lisbon, was appointed to the command of the Army, which was at once re-distributed into divisions and brigades. The 1st Battalion, 52nd, was in Anstruther's Brigade, Paget's Division; while the 2nd Battalions, 43rd and 52nd, were placed in Beresford's Brigade, Frazer's Division. During October and November, the army marched, by various routes, from Lisbon to Salamanca, where it concentrated early in December, Moore hoping to cut Napoleon's communications with France. This, however, he failed to do, and, moreover, was at one time in imminent danger of being himself cut off from his base at Corunna. The Spanish forces, which were supposed to be co-operating with the British, were defeated everywhere, and Sir John Moore found himself opposed by a French army more than ten times his strength. And in this fact he gloried, for he knew that his bold stroke had been successful in drawing after him all Napoleon's armies, thus saving Southern Spain from their ravages.

In the meanwhile reinforcements, under Sir David Baird (10,000 men), had been sent from England to Corunna, and with these were the 1st Battalion 43rd, and the 1st

Battalion 95th Rifles, who were placed in a brigade commanded by ROBERT CRAUFURD. The reinforcements succeeded in joining Sir John Moore's army, on the 20th December, at Mayorga, and the united forces, now consisting of about 25,000 men, advanced on Sahagun, with the intention of attacking the French, known to be at Saldanha. Before this was reached, however, news arrived of the rapid advance (on the flank) of another and larger French force, and it became imperative for Moore to change his plans. The British fleet, escorting transports, was lying off Corunna, and the general decided to withdraw in that direction, embark his army, and convey it by sea southwards, when disembarking again he would be able to strike at the French in an unexpected direction.

THE RETREAT TO CORUNNA.

A retreat before a daring enemy in overwhelming numbers must, under any circumstances, be an undertaking of considerable difficulty, and Moore's retreat was hampered in more ways than one. Spanish troops continually blocked the road, and instead of aiding him, impeded his progress. The weather was the worst that can be imagined, since the rigours of winter had set in ; and the whole march to the coast was a test of endurance such as, fortunately, an army has seldom to be put to. The French, in three divisions, kept ever on the heels of the retreating British, and so closely that advanced bodies of their cavalry were constantly charging the rearguard. To these drawbacks to the orderly retirement of the force were added others, viz. :—that the transport was inadequate to convey the baggage, that store dépôts on the line of retreat had had to be dismantled, and that the camp followers (including English women and children) were numerous.

Both battalions of the 43rd and of the 52nd took part in the retreat, and acquitted themselves nobly—as, indeed, did the whole army. But it must not be thought that the retirement on Corunna was in any sense a flight ; it was,

on the contrary, a well-conceived and a well-carried out movement. As was only natural, a certain amount of dissatisfaction at having to retire existed among the troops, but during the long ten days march (and there was many a night march also), they were constantly called on to fight rearguard actions in order to save the baggage or the stragglers. As the enemy pressed forward, the marches grew longer and the pace more rapid, and in consequence the number of stragglers increased ; men did all that mortal men could do ; they were often forced to march barefooted in the frozen snow, to sleep by the wayside in blinding snowstorms, and to ever exert themselves to keep in touch with their columns. Many dropped out—never to be heard of again ; others died in the ranks from sheer fatigue ; and the brave deeds that were done by all would fill a volume—as is evident from the numerous stories that are told of the men of the 43rd and 52nd alone, who were but one-tenth of the whole army.

As an instance of courage and discipline NAPIER relates the following of two 43rd soldiers :—“ On the night of the 26th December, the chasseurs of the Imperial Guard rode close up to the bridge of Castro Gonzalo, and captured some women and baggage. Craufurd’s Brigade was, as usual, on rearguard, and covering the passage of the Esla. JOHN WALTON, a native of the south of Ireland, and RICHARD JACKSON, an Englishman (both soldiers of the 43rd), were posted in the hollow road on the plain beyond the bridge, and at a distance from their piquet. If the enemy approached, one was to fire, run back to the brow of the hill, and give notice if there were many or few ; the other was to maintain his ground. A party of cavalry, following a hay cart, stole up close to these men, and suddenly galloped in, with a view to kill them and surprise the post. Jackson fired, but was overtaken, and received 12 or 14 severe wounds in an instant ; he came staggering on, notwithstanding his mangled state, and gave the signal. Walton, with equal resolution and more fortune, defended himself with his bayonet, and wounded several of the

assailants, who retreated, leaving him unhurt ; but his cap, his knapsack, his belts, and his musket were cut in about twenty places, and his bayonet was bent double, his musket covered with blood, and notched like a saw from the muzzle to the lock. Jackson escaped death during the retreat, and finally recovered of his wounds."

Next day, Craufurd destroyed the bridge, in order to retard the pursuit of the enemy, and retired to Benevente, where the army was fortunate in gaining two days' rest. Here a somewhat extraordinary incident occurred. On account of the terrible cold, every endeavour was made to house both men and horses in the town, and in one huge convent (built in the form of a square round a courtyard) the horses of the cavalry and artillery were packed as close as possible on the ground floor, while on the floor above slept several thousands of men. The companies of the 43rd that had been engaged in the destruction of the bridge arrived at the convent late at night, and the officers, on looking in, saw to their horror that a large window shutter was on fire, and that the flames were spreading to the rafters above. It was apparent that, in a few moments, the straw under the horses would ignite, and probably 6,000 men and horses perish in the flames. "CAPTAIN THOMAS LLOYD, of the 43rd," says Napier, "a man of great activity, strength, and presence of mind, made a sign to his companions to keep silence, and springing on to the nearest horse, ran along the backs of the others until he reached the flaming shutter, which he tore off its hinges and cast out of the window ; then returning quietly, awakened some of the soldiers, and cleared the passage without creating any alarm, which, in such a case, would have been as destructive as the flames."

From Benevente the army retired to Borillas, where Craufurd's Brigade (including the 1st Battalion 43rd and 2nd Battalion 52nd) left the main road, and marched viâ Orenze, to Vigo, embarking there, on the 13th January, for England.

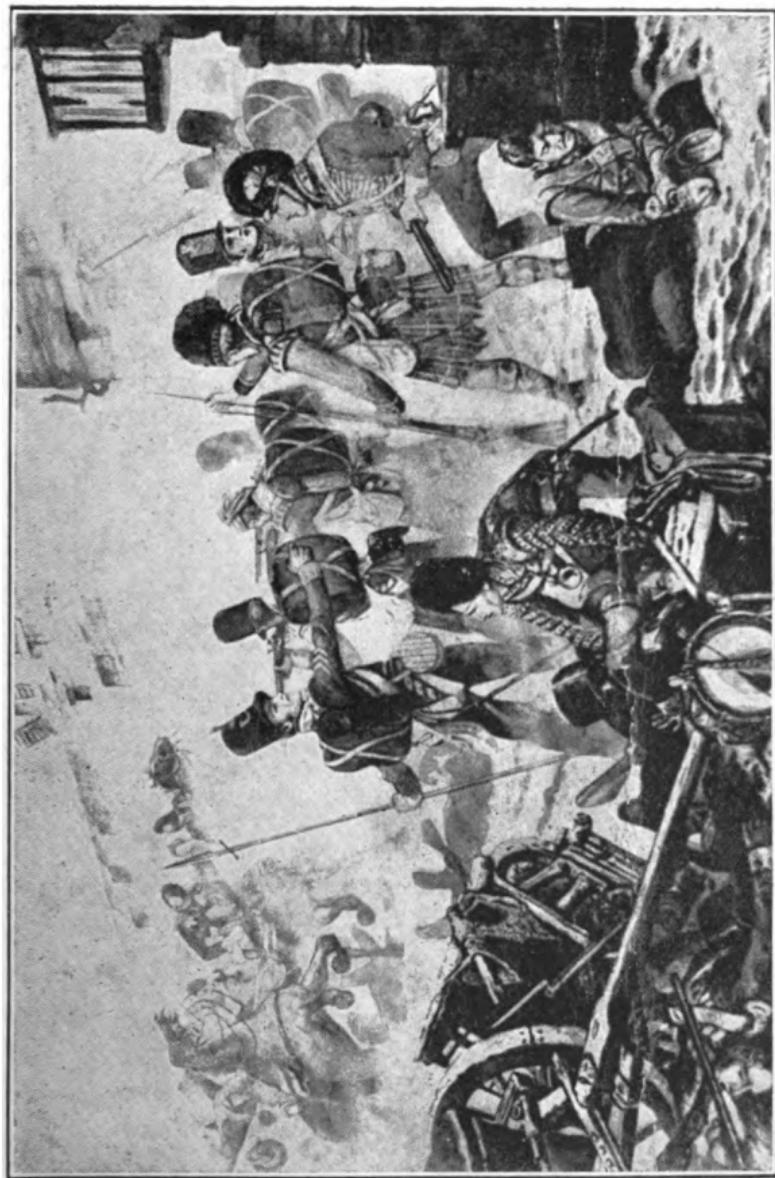
The other battalion of each Regiment continued to

retreat to Corunna with the rest of Sir John Moore's army, and each day the hardships of the march increased. The roads were deep in snow and slush ; the men's shoes had fallen to pieces, their clothes were in rags, and provisions were scanty. The numbers who were unable to keep up increased every hour, and many fell into the ditches by the roadside and died from exhaustion. Yet, when occasion required it, the rear-guard formed up at a moment's notice and fought desperately with the bodies of the enemy's cavalry that constantly rode in on them. Eventually, it became impossible to any longer protect the stragglers, who were consequently either taken prisoners or mercilessly sabred by the enemy. It was during these last days of the retreat that SERGEANT WILLIAM NEWMAN of the 43rd covered himself with glory. He had been left at a village four miles from Betanzos to collect and bring on some stragglers and sick of various regiments, and very shortly after the rearguard of the army had marched off, the French cavalry were seen approaching. A panic seized the wretched worn-out men, and they endeavoured to escape to the rearguard. Newman, however, with great presence of mind, checked the flight, and managed to collect nearly a hundred men, whom he drew up in the narrowest part of the village street. The enemy's horsemen charged again and again, but were each time repulsed. The sick and weakly men were sent as rapidly as possible to the rear, and Newman withdrew his little force to a second position. Here the same thing occurred, and for four long miles the gallant sergeant continued to repulse the charges of the enemy, until, in the end, our cavalry, becoming aware of what was going on, rode out to the rescue. By his action Sergeant Newman was considered to have saved the lives of 400 or 500 British soldiers ; and, after his return to England, the Commander-in-Chief gave him a commission as Ensign in the West India Regiment, and £50 ; while Lieutenant-Colonel Hull (commanding the 43rd) presented him with a silver medal, as "a reward for distinguished conduct at Betanzos, 1809."

At last, on the 11th January, Corunna was reached, Moore having out-distanced the enemy, who did not appear in any strength until three days later. This enabled a large body of stragglers to rejoin the army; and a terrible sight many of them presented, as they crawled in on hands and knees, unable to put their lacerated feet to the ground. The various journals of Regimental officers all agree in the descriptions of the countless horrors of the retreat, but they usually contain also some striking episode to which the writer was a witness. Captain Diggle, of the 52nd, putting his notes together in after years, thus appreciates the services of a soldier's wife:—

“ Well do I remember, he says, the kind act of a worthy woman, Sally Macan, the wife of a gallant soldier of my company, who observing me to be falling to the rear from illness and fatigue, whipped off her garters, and secured the soles of my boots which were separating from the upper leathers, and set me on my feet again; even then, decorated as I was with the ‘Garter,’ I should have fallen into the hands of the French, had not Colonel Barclay sent his horse to the rear for me, being unable from weakness to fetch up my leeway. A year or so after this, I had the opportunity of requiting the kindness of poor Sally Macan, by giving her a lift on my horse the morning after she had given birth to a child in the bivouac.”

Yet another tale of a 52nd woman—Mrs. Malony, wife of the Regimental master-tailor—who made her fortune during the retreat, but lost it again, as well as her life, within a few hours. As the troops neared Corunna and the enemy's pursuit became more vigorous, the baggage animals broke down, and on reaching a steep mountain a few miles from Nogales, it was found necessary to abandon the military chest. In order that the money (£25,000 in dollars) should not fall into the hands of the enemy, the barrels containing it were rolled over the side of a precipice, where, after bounding from rock to rock, they split in pieces and the dollars were scattered far and wide in the wooded ravines. The troops themselves, though witnesses of what



SERGEANT NEWMAN COVERING THE RETREAT TO CORUNNA.

had taken place, did not attempt to quit the ranks to gather the money ; with the followers, however, it was different, and a rush took place to fill their pockets. The sight of a fortune pouring down the mountain side and to be possessed for the gathering was more than they could withstand, and men and women came in to Corunna hardly able to walk from the weight of the dollars. Mrs. Malony, quick of eye and of fingers, had feathered her nest right well, and had a prospect of a comfortable old age. But cruel fate cut short her joy, for on stepping from the boat to the ship to embark for home a few days later, she slipped and fell overboard, the weight of the money distributed about her person causing her to sink like a shotted corpse.

THE BATTLE OF CORUNNA.

(16th January, 1809).

When Corunna was reached on the 11th January, the ships had not arrived, and it was therefore necessary to make dispositions for the defence of the town, in order to cover the embarkation. Moore's intention had been to embark his army without fighting, but, although the ships came in on the 14th, it was then too late to avoid a battle. Meanwhile the baggage, sick, and other incumbrances were got on board, and Moore took up the only position that, with the few men available, it was possible to occupy ; that it was a most disadvantageous position he himself knew well.

The main position taken up by the British may be briefly described as a ridge about a mile and a half long, distant some two miles from the town. Here Hope's and Baird's Divisions were drawn up, with the River Mero protecting the left flank. Fraser's Division (with which was the 43rd) was echeloned to the right rear, and Paget was in the centre in reserve, with the 52nd and five companies of the Rifles thrown out in front. Thus the whole force formed as it were a semi-circular cordon about Corunna ; but within a

mile of the cordon the French on the 16th January occupied a higher ridge, from which they commanded the British position, and were able to pour down a galling fire on front and flank.

"At two o'clock in the afternoon," writes Napier, "twenty thousand French veterans opened this battle against fourteen thousand British, who, having but nine six-pounders to oppose to a numerous light artillery, were also galled by eleven heavy guns on the rocks; and soon that formidable battery opened the fight with a slaughtering fire, sending its bullets crashing through the English ranks from right to centre."

The village of Elvina, lying slightly in advance of the right of the British main position was carried by the French infantry, and the fight commenced in earnest. The enemy's columns advanced to the attack; Hope's Division stood its ground and drove them back; Baird re-occupied Elvina; but the French, nothing daunted and being reinforced, plunged forward again. All this Moore had foreseen, and so far everything had gone as he desired; the British line had never wavered; and the gallant general stood watching the struggle around Elvina, waiting for the moment to call on Paget to deliver the counter-stroke with his reserve. The moment came, but with it the fatal cannon-shot that struck down the great commander. Like Wolfe at Quebec, Sir John Moore lived long enough to see victory secure; for Paget, pouring into the valley, drove the French before him in all directions, and was only prevented from annihilating the enemy by the advent of night.

What might have happened it is impossible to say; for Baird, the second in command, fell almost at the same time as Moore, and the command devolved on Hope, who, unaware that the French were not only demoralized but also short of ammunition, decided to withdraw under cover of darkness, and embark the army with all speed, which was duly effected.

In this eventful retreat the casualties in the two battalions of the 43rd amounted to 1 officer (Captain Carruthers,

died), 3 sergeants, and 244 rank and file killed, wounded, and missing. The casualties in the 2nd battalion of the 52nd are not recorded, but those in the 1st battalion numbered 2 officers (Captain Robert Campbell and Lieutenant James Ormsby) severely wounded, 5 rank and file killed, 1 sergeant and 30 rank and file wounded, and 93 rank and file missing.

But greatest loss of all to the 52nd was Sir John Moore, their Colonel, who was endeared to every man in that brave little army whose successful withdrawal he had carefully planned and carried out. That he died the death that he would have wished is undoubted, for he succumbed, in the moment of victory, surrounded by men to whose war-training he had devoted the best years of his life. While watching the struggle at the village of Elvina, he was struck on the left breast by a cannon-shot. "The shock," writes the historian of the Peninsular War, "threw him from his horse with violence, but he rose again in a sitting posture, his countenance unchanged and his steadfast eye still fixed upon the regiments engaged in his front, no sign betraying a sensation of pain. In a few moments, when he was satisfied that the troops were gaining ground, his countenance brightened, and he suffered himself to be taken to the rear. Being placed in a blanket for removal, an entanglement of the belt caused the hilt of his sword to enter the wound, and Captain Hardinge attempted to take it away altogether, but with martial pride the stricken man forbade the alleviation—he would not part with his sword in the field. Epaminondas, mortally wounded at Mantinea, was anxious for the recovery of his shield. Moore, mortally wounded at Corunna, sustained additional torture rather than part with his sword!"*

Within a few hours, while the army was embarking, the body of the great general, wrapt in a military cloak, was

* The blade of the sword now hangs in the Officers' Mess of the 1st Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, and the Officers of the 2nd Battalion also possess a sword which belonged to their gallant Colonel.

laid in a grave hastily dug in the Citadel ; the booming of the enemy's guns, firing at random on the transports, formed the only salute ; and on the morrow the earth was trodden down by the feet of his foes, though the French marshal, Soult, marked his appreciation of the merits of his adversary by eventually raising a monument over his last resting place.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
 As his corse to the rampart we hurried ;
 Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
 O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
 The sods with our bayonets turning—
 By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
 And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
 Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him ;
 But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
 With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
 And we spoke not a word of sorrow ;
 But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
 And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollowed his narrow bed
 And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
 That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
 And we far away on the pillow.

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
 And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him—
 But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
 In a grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring—
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory ;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone in his glory.

CHARLES WOLFE.

CHAPTER VII.

CAMPAIGNS OF 1809—1810 IN THE PENINSULA.

ON their arrival in England after their memorable retreat to Corunna, both battalions of the 43rd were quartered at Colchester and both battalions of the 52nd at Deal. The fatigues of the hazardous march had told considerably on the men, but knowing that war was still in the breeze, every effort was made to bring the regiments up to full strength as rapidly as possible. Perhaps no more remarkable proof of the warlike spirit of the times is to be found than in the fact that the 2nd Battalion of the 43rd received from the Militia and other sources no fewer than 500 recruits within a week of its arrival at Colchester. And it was well that men were so readily forthcoming, for barely three months elapsed before the 1st Battalions of the 43rd and 52nd were under orders for the Peninsula.

On the 25th May 1809 these two battalions and the 1st Battalion 95th Rifles (now the RIFLE BRIGADE) sailed from England, under the command of Brigadier-General ROBERT CRAUFURD, and for five years bore the brunt of the severest fighting of the war. It is a date to be remembered, as marking the formation of a comradeship which has stood the test of upwards of a hundred years. It is true that the three corps were old friends, since they had been trained together (under Sir John Moore) at Shorncliffe, and had taken part in the Corunna campaign as the Flank Brigade, but they had not hitherto been allotted special duties as a brigade of light troops.

Meanwhile much had been going on at the seat of war, for although the British troops in the country were few, the

Spaniards and Portuguese were attempting to resist the inroads of the French, whose object was now the invasion of Portugal. Sir Arthur Wellesley left England with reinforcements early in the spring, and after marching to Oporto, repulsed the French (who were making for Lisbon) at the passage of the Douro, and drove them back to Galicia. Imagining that he had crippled the French, and being misinformed as to the number of troops that the enemy had in the field, Sir Arthur determined to make the attempt, in conjunction with the Spanish army, to drive King Joseph out of Madrid. Unfortunately he had no real knowledge of Spanish character, though he soon learned that it was quite hopeless to expect anything from the Spanish generals, whose sole idea appeared to be to obtain all the honour and glory without any of the risks. The Spaniards were in every respect unreliable, and, as Sir John Moore had found them, quite useless when it became a matter of stubborn fighting; so that when, in July, Wellesley found himself pitted against an enormous French force in the neighbourhood of TALAVERA, he had to depend entirely on his 20,000 British soldiers to save the Spanish army from destruction. Not only did he do this, but he succeeded in turning what was at one period likely to become a disaster into a brilliant victory.

To revert to Craufurd's Brigade: so dependent on the wind and so slow were the old sailing vessels in those days that it was not until the 29th June that Craufurd's troops reached Lisbon. Thence they proceeded up the Tagus in boats for three days, when they disembarked and marched to Vallada (5th July), with the intention of pushing on to join Sir Arthur Wellesley's army, which was reported to be in the neighbourhood of Talavera and about to encounter Marshal Victor's force.

THE MARCH TO TALAVERA.

In the hottest weeks of the Spanish summer Craufurd's Brigade performed a march which had it been carried out

under the most favourable circumstances would have been remarkable, and as actually carried out remains to this day perhaps an unbeaten record. The three regiments—each nearly eleven hundred strong—were pronounced at the time to be the pick of the British Army, and formed “the finest and most splendid brigade that ever took the field”; their leader was a man with peculiar aptitude for maintaining order and discipline on the line of march, whose “Orders for Marches” have never been improved on, and who, though feared by all under him, was ever mindful of the welfare of his men. Craufurd knew what he could get out of his troops, and how far they could march on an emergency; he was able to detect at once when the strain was becoming too severe, and he paid particular attention to the feeding of his men. In this latter respect he was a terror to the Commissariat officials, whom he appears to have regarded as his particular enemies. On one occasion an officer came to him and complained that he could get no rations for his men, whereupon Craufurd roared out “Send the commissary to me. D—n him, I’ll hang him, if the provisions are not up to-night.” The commissary, on hearing what Craufurd had said, went and reported the matter to Lord Wellington.

“Did General Craufurd go so far as that? Did he actually say he would hang you?” asked Lord Wellington.

“Yes, my lord, he did,” answered the commissary, imagining that his lordship was sympathetic.

“Then,” said Wellington, “I should strongly advise you to get the rations ready; for if General Craufurd said he would hang you, by G—d, he’ll do it.”

After leaving Vallada on the 6th July, the brigade marched steadily on by Abrantes, Villa Velha, and Castello Branco, to Zebreira, on the frontier of Spain. Thence the pace was quickened, Craufurd becoming aware that Wellesley was in touch with the enemy, and by forced marches Coria was reached on the 23rd July. Here Craufurd decided that it was absolutely necessary to halt for a day, in order to gather his brigade together for the

final effort, and on the 24th the effort commenced. Day and night the troops plodded forward, arriving at Naval Moral on the 27th, and getting into bivouac, after a twenty mile march, at Malpartida de Placencia on the 28th. No sooner had the brigade settled down than fugitive Spaniards passing through the bivouac spread the alarm that the allied army was hard pressed, whereupon Craufurd gave the order to proceed. Within twenty-six hours they covered a distance of sixty-two English miles, each man carrying a weight of between fifty and sixty pounds, and the whole brigade having but seventeen stragglers. But the disappointment of these gallant men was great, for the battle had been fought and won a few hours before the Light Brigade—a strong compact body, upwards of three thousand bayonets—marched on to the field on the morning of the 29th July.

Although the Regiments themselves had missed the battle, a company of the 43rd, as well as one of the 52nd, had taken part in it. The formation of these companies was peculiar: when the Army marched into Spain in November 1808, there were left sick at Lisbon a certain number of officers and men, who, on recovery, were formed into a battalion of detachments, each company being composed of men of distinct regiments, under their own officers. The 43rd Company consisted of Lieutenants Brown and Brockman, 4 sergeants and 100 rank and file; while, with the 52nd Company there were Captain Poole, Lieut. Woodgate, Ensigns Royds and Wood, 3 sergeants and 130 rank and file. In the brigade commanded by General Richard Stewart (himself an old 43rd officer), these companies were engaged in the attack on the enemy's position near Grijou, on the 11th May 1809, and on the following day at the Passage of the Douro, when Lieutenant Woodgate (52nd) was severely wounded, and 9 men of the 43rd, and 10 of the 52nd were reported killed, wounded, or missing. Moreover, the companies, as we have said, had the good fortune to be present at the Battle of TALAVERA, on the 27th and 28th July, the casualties being 10 men of

the 43rd Company and 26 men of the 52nd Company, while Lieutenant George Brown (43rd) was wounded, and Captain Gardiner (43rd), brigade-major to General Stewart, was killed.

After assisting in burying the dead, Craufurd's Light Brigade received orders to move out and take up the outposts of the Army, and henceforward it continued to cover the front, both when the army was halted and when on the march. Thus, being constantly in touch with the enemy, its duties were ever of the most exciting nature, and undoubtedly its three regiments had greater opportunities of distinguishing themselves than had any other regiments of the army.

EXPEDITION TO WALCHEREN.

(July—September, 1809).

While these events were in progress in the Peninsula, the 2nd Battalions of the 43rd and 52nd were ordered on service elsewhere. The British Government having decided to despatch an expedition of some 40,000 men to occupy the islands at the mouth of the Scheldt, and to destroy the French ships lying in that river, together with the docks and arsenals at Antwerp, the 43rd and 52nd embarked at Deal in July 1809, and landed on South Beveland early in August. Flushing was now blockaded, and subjected to a heavy bombardment, against which the defenders were powerless. They continued, however, to hold out for some time, making an occasional sortie, and keeping up an ineffectual fire from the ramparts, until, on the 15th August, seeing their town in flames, and aware of the hopelessness of further resistance, the governor and the garrison surrendered, when the British took possession of all the stores which the place contained. The expedition, however, which began so well, was destined to prove a complete failure; for owing to absence of co-operation between the military and the naval forces, a forward movement was

delayed, until a foe, more ruthless than any human enemy, fell on the unfortunate troops and decimated the ranks. Walcheren fever struck down officers and men ; and within a fortnight, the army was paralysed, thousands of men being placed *hors de combat*, and all thought of a continuance of the operations being abandoned. The sole hope of saving further loss of life was to leave the country, and at the end of August and beginning of September, the 43rd and 52nd set sail for England, with nearly every man on the sick list. No more need be said of this ill-fated expedition ; of the army 7,000 men succumbed to the disease, and of the 43rd 126.

Reverting to the movements of the 1st Battalions in the Peninsula :—After his brilliant victory at Talavera, Sir Arthur Wellesley had imagined that Soult and his army were in a state of disorganized flight, and it was only by the fortunate capture of the enemy's despatches that he discovered that the French Marshal, far from being in a distressed condition, was actually intending to cross the Gredos mountains and strike at the British rear. Yet, even then, Wellesley had learned but half the truth, and considered that he was well able to hold his own against Soult's 15,000 men. To his discomfiture, however, he soon found that he would have to deal, not with the one army, but with the combined forces of Soult, Mortier, Ney, and Kellermann, numbering upwards of 50,000 fighting men ; moreover, on the 2nd August, information was received that Soult had fallen upon Placencia and captured all the British stores there. The situation, as was frequently the case in Peninsular campaigns, was a desperate one. Only by immediate retreat could disaster be averted, for Wellesley had but 17,000 half-starved soldiers to oppose to his 50,000 enemies. Leaving his 1,500 sick at Talavera, therefore, on the 2nd August, he commenced the retreat, but not before he had arranged that the Spanish General, Cuesta, should look after his hospital, and guard his rear against the inroads of Marshal Victor. On that day the Light Brigade reached Oropesa, and then commenced an arduous march,

replete with privations of every description. The heat was oppressive, and food was scanty ; the acorns, which the men ate to appease their hunger, produced dysentery, and fever was rife ; it required only an encounter with an outnumbering foe to annihilate Wellesley's gallant little army. Fortunately, however, it was spared this calamity, although Cuesta, failing in the task which he had agreed to undertake, abandoned the British sick and wounded at Talavera, and followed close on the retreating British, thus permitting Victor to press the rearguard.

On the 4th August, the army crossed to the south bank of the Tagus by the bridge of Arzobispo, and the Light Brigade proceeded to the broken bridge of Almaraz, in order to prevent Soult from crossing the river thereabouts. A fortnight later, the Light Brigade marched to Castello de Vide, and thence, after a week's rest, moved into cantonments at Campo Mayor, where it remained until the middle of December. From Campo Mayor three weeks' marching brought the Brigade to Pinhel, on the 5th January 1810, when its immediate troubles were at an end.

The year 1809 had been, for both battalions of the 43rd and 52nd, full of hardships. It opened, as related in the previous chapter, with the last stage of the Corunna campaign ; it closed with a retreat similar in many respects to that to Corunna ; and it included the disastrous expedition to Walcheren. Within the twelve months, almost one-third of each battalion of the two Regiments had been struck off the strength—mostly to find graves in foreign lands, yet few shot down in battle.

THE LIGHT DIVISION.

On the 22nd February 1810, a General Order was issued by Lord Wellington, attaching the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the Portuguese Caçadores to Brigadier-General Craufurd's Brigade, which was henceforward to be called the LIGHT DIVISION. The Caçadores joined in the following June, and on the 4th August, by a further General Order, the

Light Division was divided into two brigades, as follows:—43rd, 3rd Caçadores, and 4 companies 95th, in one brigade, commanded by Lt.-Colonel Beckwith, of the 95th; 52nd, 1st Caçadores, and 4 companies 95th, in the other brigade, commanded by Lt.-Colonel Barclay, of the 52nd.

As a self-contained fighting force, under the command of Major-General Robert Craufurd, the Light Division commenced the campaign of 1810, and, with its two brigades always intact and supporting one another, it continued in the forefront of the fighting throughout the four succeeding years. To it also belonged Captain Ross's troop of horse artillery—the famous CHESTNUT TROOP, on whose skilfully handled guns the infantry regiments had frequently to rely for safety.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1810.

The situation at the beginning of 1810 may be summarized as follows:—

Wellington, aware of his weakness in numbers, had withdrawn his army to Portugal, and had commenced the construction of the stupendous fortified camp known as the Lines of Torres Vedras, extending from Lisbon to the sea-coast on the north-west, and capable of accommodating his whole army in the event of its being forced to take up a defensive position against overwhelming numbers. But he did not yet give way before the French. On the contrary, he presented a bold front on the frontiers of Portugal, and checked invasion by two routes. General Hill was instructed to guard the line of the Tagus, while Wellington himself held the line of the Mondego, the Light Division being pushed well ahead, as a corps of observation, to the River Agueda, along whose banks the German Hussars formed a chain of posts.

During the early months of the year, Craufurd's headquarters were established at Pinhel, where the 52nd remained, as a support to the 43rd and 95th, out in front. The Rifles held the bridge of Barba del Puerco, and the

43rd, on their right, observed the line of the Agueda southwards in the direction of Ciudad Rodrigo. To the east of the river the French were everywhere, and were besieging the Spanish garrison of the last-named fortress, after reducing which, they proposed to attempt the capture of the fortress of Almeida, situated between Pinhel and the Agueda. To give battle in this advanced position was not, however, Wellington's intention; he had not sufficient troops either to succour the besieged in Ciudad Rodrigo, or to reinforce the Portuguese garrison of Almeida. The rôle of the Light Division was to observe, and to fall back, if the enemy were seen to be advancing in force. That their task was a difficult one need not be said; that they were equal to it is, perhaps, proved by the following remarks written by one of the officers at the time:—

“ Seven minutes sufficed at midnight for the Division to get under arms, and half an hour by day or night to assemble at the alarm posts, with the baggage loaded and stationed at a convenient distance in the rear. The troops evinced a celerity, promptness, and intelligence, never surpassed under any circumstances.”

COMBAT ON THE COA, NEAR ALMEIDA.

(24th July 1810).

With the exception of a fierce night attack, by the French General Férey, on the 10th March, when an abortive attempt was made to surprise the 95th Rifles holding the bridge of Barba del Puerco, no fighting took place until July. On the 10th of that month, the Spanish garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo, after withstanding a siege of 40 days, surrendered to the French, who then determined to lay siege to the fortress of Almeida, held by a Portuguese garrison. Craufurd's orders were to fall back across the Coa river as the enemy advanced, so as not to become seriously engaged. The general, however, was a man of deep feelings; he was disgusted that the gallant defenders

of Ciudad Rodrigo had been forced to surrender, without an effort being made to relieve the place; and he foresaw the fall of Almeida for a similar reason. In this state of mind, the commander of the Light Division determined to do what he could to stay the French advance, not realizing, perhaps, that by so doing he was jeopardizing his small force, if not also upsetting all Wellington's plans. The situation on the 23rd July was as follows:—Craufurd had some 3,200 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and six guns, to oppose to about 30,000 Frenchmen. Nor did the ground lend itself to a long resistance. His cavalry and the Chestnut Troop were posted about a mile in front on the open plain lying between Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, and the infantry position extended for little more than a mile along the edge of the valley. The left rested on an old stone windmill tower, within half a mile of the fortress of Almeida, and the right was thrown back among the rugged spurs on the steep side of the valley to within about 1,000 yards of the river Coa. The sole line of retreat was by way of a single narrow stone bridge, which spanned the Coa in rear of the centre of the position.

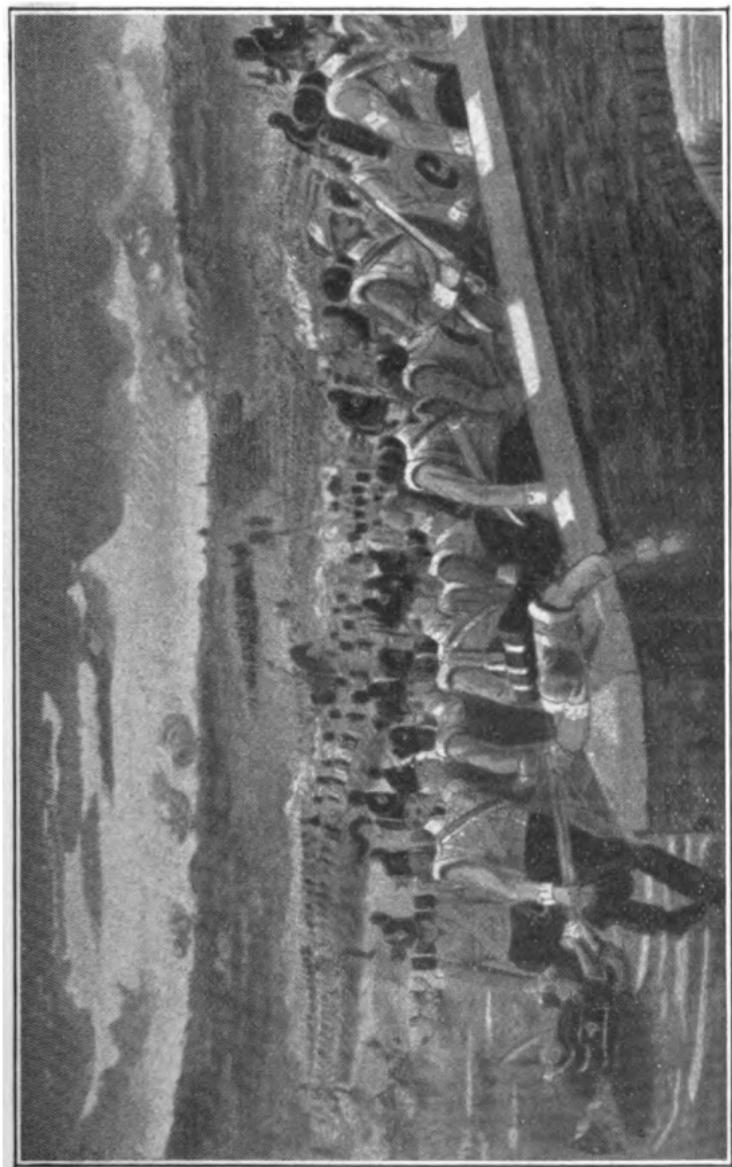
On the morning of the 24th July, the enemy was seen to be advancing, and before long the cavalry and the guns were driven in. The latter then came into action near the windmill tower, which was held by half a company of the 52nd under Lieutenant Dawson. Next to this tower was the 43rd, and on their right were the 95th Rifles, the 1st and 3rd Caçadores, and lastly the 52nd. From the strength and rapidity of the enemy's advance, it at once became evident that the Light Division would be unable to hold its ground, and Craufurd issued orders for a withdrawal across the bridge in echelon of battalions from the left, the cavalry and artillery being instructed to retire to the far side of the river forthwith. But the French cavalry gave the British troops little time for manoeuvring, and had ridden into the position almost before the retirement had commenced.

The main road to the bridge ran between the left of the

position and Almeida, and was immediately blocked with the retiring cavalry and artillery, who were hotly pursued by the French dragoons. The enemy's infantry came pouring over the edge of the valley, as the British withdrew, and soon his guns were showering grape-shot down the steep side of the ravine. Fortunately there was abundance of cover to be obtained behind the rocks, boulders, and walled enclosures of the numerous vineyards. Yet these very obstacles made the retirement both slow and difficult, and enabled the pursuing Frenchmen to come to close quarters. Sir William Napier, himself present in command of a company of the 43rd, and later in the action wounded severely, described what followed in these words :

“ Then the British regiments, with singular intelligence and discipline, extricated themselves from their perilous situation. Falling back slowly and stopping to fight whenever opportunity offered, they retired down the ravine, tangled as it was with crags and vineyards, in despite of their enemies ; who were so fierce and eager that even their horsemen rode among the inclosures, striking at the soldiers as they mounted the walls or scrambled over the rocks.

“ Soon the retreating troops approached the river, and the ground became more open, but the left wing, hardest pressed and having the shortest distance, arrived while the bridge was crowded with artillery and cavalry, and the right was still distant ! Major Macleod of the 43rd instantly rallied four companies of his regiment on a hill to cover the line of passage. He was joined by some Riflemen, and at the same time the brigade-major Rowan posted two companies on another hill to the left, flanking the road ; these posts were maintained while the right wing was filing over the river, yet the French, gathering in great numbers, made a rush, forcing the British companies back before the bridge was cleared, and when part of the 52nd was still distant from it. Very imminent was the danger, but Macleod, a young man endowed with a natural genius for war, turned his horse, called on the troops to follow, waved



THE COMBAT AT THE COA, NEAR ALMEIDA,

his cap, and rode with a shout towards the enemy, on whom the suddenness of the thing and the animating gesture of the man produced the effect designed, for the soldiers rushed after him, cheering and charging as if a whole army had been at their backs ; the enemy's skirmishers, not comprehending this, stopped short, and before their surprise was over the 52nd passed the river, and Macleod followed at speed : it was a fine exploit ! ”

The situation was saved, and the Light Division, after crossing the bridge, took up a position on the hillside commanding it. The scene that ensued was as dramatic as any ever witnessed in warfare. Only by the bridge could the river be passed ; and Craufurd's troops were so posted that the fire from their muskets and rifles converged on the narrow roadway. The French never hesitated, and when they realized that there was no other means of reaching the British, they then and there formed up with the intention of storming the bridge. Somewhat theatrically, a drummer ran to the front and beat the “charge” ; the officer followed, and then the column in hot haste. Shots rang out from the hillside, but still the column advanced. The bridge was nearly crossed before the leading man was shot down ; then, the range obtained, each bullet dealt destruction, until the bridge became choked with corpses, and the brave assailants were no more. From sheer exuberance of spirits, the British sent forth a wild shout, which, echoing across the deep ravine, was accepted by the Frenchmen as a challenge. They shouted back in defiance, and in a few minutes a second column was seen advancing on the bridge. Craufurd would have willingly stopped the slaughter, had it been in his power to do so, but to allow the bridge to fall into the enemy's hands was impossible. The sections were mown down as they pressed forward, and though half-a-dozen men managed to cross the bridge unharmed, they were forced to hide themselves among the rocks. Yet even this was not the end, for a third column attempted the impossible, and met a fate similar to that which had befallen their comrades. No further organized

assault was made, but for some little time small parties attempted to rush the bridge and bring away their comrades lying among the rocks on the other side. At length, late in the afternoon, a heavy storm came on, when covered by the pelting rain, the Frenchmen succeeded in rejoining their regiments.

The half company of the 52nd which had been posted at the windmill tower had a narrow escape. Owing to the rapidity of the enemy's advance, the post was immediately cut off from the rest of the position ; the guns of the Chestnut Troop got away to the rear at the gallop ; but Lieutenant Dawson saw that his men would have been sabred in an instant, if they showed themselves in the open. Fortune, however, favoured him, for the French, as they advanced, did not notice that the tower was occupied, and passed it by. So Dawson and his men lay in hiding all day, and under cover of darkness withdrew towards Almeida, whence, unobserved by the enemy, he took his party along the river bank, and crossing the Coa lower down, eventually joined the regiment—not a little to everyone's surprise.

That the fight at the Coa ought never to have taken place is perhaps true, but Craufurd did not regret it, as he was overjoyed at the manner in which his splendid troops had extricated themselves from a difficult situation. Considering all things, the British losses were not excessive—only some 300 killed, wounded, and missing, and it was estimated that the French lost more than double that number. The 43rd suffered severely, having 119 casualties. Lieut.-Colonel EDWARD HULL, who had joined to take up the command of the Regiment only on the previous day, was killed, and with him fell Captain Ewen Cameron and Lieutenant John Nason, as well as two sergeants and 13 rank and file. Amongst the wounded were Captains Deshon, Lloyd, W. Napier, J. W. Hull, Lieutenants Johnstone, Hopkins, Harvest, McDearmid, Stephenson, Roger Frederick, Shaw (General Craufurd's A.D.C.), eight sergeants and 28 rank and file ; while 15

rank and file were returned as missing. The 52nd were more fortunate, having but one man killed, two officers (Major Ridewood and Captain R. Campbell) wounded, and three men missing.

When some thirty-eight years afterwards a medal was granted to the survivors of the Peninsular War, this hard-fought action was not considered worthy of a clasp—an injustice that was felt by more than one of the survivors. Lieutenant Roger Frederick, for instance, had his leg carried away by a round shot while galloping for General Craufurd, and in consequence was invalided out of the service; but when, in 1848, he put forward a claim to the medal, he was refused it, on the grounds that he had not been present in a "general action." Yet Wellington wrote of this engagement:—"I am informed that, throughout this trying day, the commanding officers of the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th, Lieut.-Colonels Hull, Barclay, and Beckwith, and all the officers and soldiers of those excellent regiments, distinguished themselves."

Napier gives three anecdotes of the behaviour of 43rd soldiers on this day. He writes:—

"Here some illustrations of the intelligence and the lofty spirit of British soldiers will not be misplaced.

"When the last of the retreating troops had passed the bridge, an Irishman of the 43rd, named Pigot, a bold turbulent fellow, leaned on his firelock, regarding the advancing enemy for some time, and then, in the author's hearing, thus delivered his opinion of the action. '*General Craufurd wanted glory, so he stopped on the wrong side of the river, and now he is knocked over to the right side. The French general won't be content until his men try to get on the wrong side also, and then they will be knocked back. Well, both will claim a victory, which is neither here nor there, but just in the middle of the river. That's glory!*' Then firing his musket, he fell into the ranks. Even to the letter was his prediction verified, for General Craufurd published a contradiction of Massena's dispatch.

"This sarcasm was enforced by one of a tragic nature.

There was a fellow-soldier to Pigot, a north of Ireland man, named Stewart, but jocularly called the 'Boy' because of his youth, being only nineteen, and of his gigantic stature and strength. He had fought bravely and displayed great intelligence beyond the river, and was one of the last men who came down to the bridge, but he would not pass. Turning round, he regarded the French with a grim look, and spoke aloud as follows. '*So! This is the end of our boasting. This is our first battle and we retreat! The Boy Stewart will not live to hear that said.*' Then striding forward in his giant might he fell furiously on the nearest enemies with the bayonet, refused the quarter they seemed desirous of granting, and died fighting in the midst of them!

"Still more touching, more noble, more heroic was the death of Sergeant ROBERT MCQUADE. During Macleod's rush this man, also from the north of Ireland, saw two Frenchmen level their muskets on rests against a high gap in a bank, awaiting the uprise of an enemy; the present Sir George Brown, then a lad of sixteen (Lieutenant in the 43rd), attempted to ascend at the fatal point, but McQuade, himself only twenty-four years of age, pulled him back, saying with a calm decided tone, '*You are too young, Sir, to be killed,*' and then offering his own person to the fire fell dead, pierced with both balls!"

BATTLE OF BUSACO.

(27th September, 1810).

The French now invested Almeida, and the Light Division fell back to Celorico, where, on the 4th August, it was divided into two brigades, as already mentioned. On the 28th August Almeida, betrayed by some Portuguese officers, surrendered to Massena, and early in September Wellington commenced to withdraw his army before the French, who were advancing on Lisbon by way of Vizeu and Coimbra. The British General's intention was to retire behind the Lines of Torres Vedras and thus safeguard

Lisbon, but before doing so he determined to give his men an opportunity of fighting, and he selected for the purpose the Sierra de Busaco, the situation of which showed him that he would be able to hamper the enemy's movements on Coimbra, if not also deal him a crushing blow. Aware that the enemy outnumbered him by nearly two to one, he nevertheless saw that the mountainous nature of the country was all in his favour, and on the 25th and 26th September he pushed his whole army across the Mondego river, in order to occupy the position on which, on the 27th, was fought the BATTLE OF BUSACO.

It would be difficult to find a more perfect defensive position than that taken up. It had, of course, certain weak points; it could be turned on the left flank by an enterprising enemy; and it presented so strong a front that it was doubtful if the most enterprising enemy would attempt its assault. Yet, as events proved, Massena made no effort to turn it, and, in fact, did the one thing which Wellington desired—hurling column after column against its front. The French General had been under the impression that the British were retiring to the coast for immediate embarkation; he knew nothing of the fortification of Torres Vedras; and he imagined that Wellington was about to abandon Portugal to its fate, and that consequently a French occupation of Lisbon was merely a matter of days. He, therefore, determined to strike at the allies with his combined forces; but, owing to ignorance of the roads, he wasted two precious days by moving all his troops on one road, and that the worst in Portugal, so that the concentration at Vizeu was much delayed. But Wellington rejoiced in the folly of his adversary, and as soon as he discovered the latter's plan, he turned back and stood across his path.

The mountain of Busaco extends from the edge of the Mondego valley to the Oporto road, for a distance of some ten miles—one great solid feature, from which project to the right and left bold and rugged spurs. To the front, *i.e.* towards the enemy, the ground consisted of an intricate

mass of deep, stony ravines—so deep that from the summit of the mountain objects at the bottom could hardly be discerned. To attack such a position, even in the days when a musket carried but 300 yards, was absolute madness, but Massena had been misinformed about the country in his front, and knew nothing of the difficulties with which his army would have to contend. Moreover, he was fully convinced that the allies would retire almost at the first shot.

At daybreak on the 27th September, Wellington's army was in position, and it was soon seen that the French were advancing to the attack. Before long had commenced one of those fierce battles which helped to establish the glory of England and the fame of Wellington; which proved the worth of the Portuguese troops; and which gave its name to be inscribed for ever on the Colours of many a gallant corps of the British army. The Light Division was posted down a spur jutting out from the left centre of the line, and was supported by a German brigade, and the 19th Portuguese Regiment; while on either side stood the other Divisions of the army. The artillery was disposed on every available salient; the cavalry held in reserve in rear; and skirmishers, pushed out well to the front, covered the whole long line.

Massena, in supreme command of the French, had under him Ney, Reynier, and Junot, each commanding an army corps, while Montbrun led the division of heavy cavalry. Ney realized from the outset that to assault such a position would be as it were to knock his head against a brick wall; but Reynier thought otherwise, and Massena fell in with his views. During the night of the 26th—27th the French light troops had crept up the ravines, and had stolen their way through the woods, so that the first streak of dawn had hardly enabled figures to be distinguished before Reynier's advanced scouts were among the sentries of Picton's outposts. Ney led three columns to the assault, and Reynier two columns, Junot's corps remaining in reserve. Massena directed Reynier to push up to the position, and then, followed

by Ney, to break through the centre and sweep the ridge. The French columns, advancing at a rapid pace through the mist which was now rolling up, were almost on the summit of the mountains before the defenders had appreciated the gravity of the situation. At one point Reynier's infantry, in considerable numbers, had actually broken through, and were proceeding, by an impetuous flank movement, to carry all before them. But Wellington saw the design and ordered the guns, close by, to enfilade the line with grape shot. At the same moment the 88th and 45th delivered a bayonet charge with such fury that the Frenchmen were driven down the mountain slopes with severe loss. Elsewhere also, Reynier's men succeeded in establishing themselves among the rocks on the mountain, but here again they were vigorously charged by the 9th regiment and driven off. Reynier's attack against Picton's portion of the position therefore recoiled ; yet, this was only the opening phase of the great fight.

Ney, meanwhile, was directing his attack on the Light Division, more to the left. Craufurd, standing on a rock overhanging the deep ravine, at the bottom of which he could now see clearly every movement of the French, was astounded at the audacity of the enemy. But there was no doubt of Ney's intention, when Loison's column dashed forward up the steep front face of the position. Simon's brigade led, throwing out swarms of skirmishers, who ascended the mountain side unchecked. In vain did the British guns fire down the slopes ; the Frenchmen with unabated speed bounded from rock to rock ; the British skirmishers were forced back ; the guns retired ; and the enemy appeared to be within an ace of carrying the position. What followed is thus described by Sir George Napier who, as a captain of the 52nd, took part in the overthrow of the French :—

“ General Craufurd himself stood on the brow of the hill watching every movement of the attacking column ; and when all our skirmishers had passed by and joined their respective corps, and the head of the enemy's column was

within a very few yards of him, he turned round, came up to the 52nd, and called out, 'Now, 52nd, revenge the death of Sir John Moore! Charge! Charge! Huzza!'; and waving his hat in the air, he was answered by a shout that appalled the enemy, and in one instant the brow of the hill bristled with two thousand British bayonets wielded by steady English hands, which soon buried them in the bodies of the fiery Gaul!"

Let loose from the position, the 43rd and 52nd went headlong down the slope; for a moment the head of the French column halted to receive the charge, and with the greatest coolness each man of the front rank fired his musket at the assailants, laying low instantly an officer and ten men of the 52nd. But this was not sufficient to check the impetuosity of the charge, for never were the men of the Light Division more eager for the fray. As they advanced, the commander of one of the French battalions was seen to be urging his men to deploy, when Captain William Jones, of the 52nd, rushed upon him and killed him with one blow of his sword, cutting off the medal which he wore and calmly putting it in his pocket as he proceeded in pursuit of the now fleeing Frenchmen. The rout was complete, a great number of the enemy were shot down or bayoneted, and many were made prisoners. Amongst the latter was the French General Simon, who was captured by Privates JAMES HOPKINS and HARRIS, of the 52nd, both of whom were subsequently rewarded with a special life pension for their gallantry on this occasion.

The four centre companies leading the charge outstripped the companies on the flanks, and carried the pursuit too far, thereby masking the flanking fire of the British muskets, which otherwise would have almost annihilated the French column. But this magnificent charge had caused destruction enough, and had decided the fate of the day. The French made in other directions a few spasmodic attempts to capture the position, but the guns of the Chestnut Troop and the musketry fire of the Portuguese regiments frustrated their efforts, and early in the afternoon a temporary truce, for the purpose of collecting the wounded, was proclaimed.

The French lost some 5,000 men, and the Allies, 1,300. Considering the nature of the fight, the casualties in the 43rd and 52nd were remarkably light, amounting altogether to only 3 men killed, and 4 officers, 2 sergeants, and 15 men wounded. Of the officers wounded Lieut.-Colonel Barclay (52nd), commanding a brigade of the Light Division, received two serious wounds, from the effects of which he died within a few months.

On the morning following the battle it became evident that Massena had abandoned the idea of renewing the attack, and proposed turning Wellington's left, in the hope of reaching Coimbra by way of the Sierra Caramula. Skirmishing became brisk, and at one time it was thought that a general action would be brought on, but Wellington quickly decided to withdraw his army from the Busaco position, and within an hour it was evacuated.

Coimbra was reached on the 30th September, and thence the retreat was continued to the Lines of Torres Vedras. The Light Division, forming the rearguard, withdrew before the pursuing enemy without allowing itself to be drawn into a serious engagement; and, passing through Condeixa, Pombal, and Alenquer, reached Arruda (part of the Lines of Torres Vedras) on the 10th October. With such secrecy had the great fortifications been constructed that their existence was unknown not only to the French but also to the army for whose occupation they had been thrown up. Bitter was Massena's disappointment at finding this impregnable barrier between him and Lisbon; and after spending a month before the Lines, he drew off his army towards Thomar, and thence retired to Santarem, where he went into cantonments for the winter. The Light Division was pushed forward to Valle, on outpost duty, and throughout the winter the French and British sentries watched each other from either end of the two bridges which, half-a-mile apart, spanned the Rio Mayor, flowing between Santarem and Valle. Each of these bridges was prepared with mines by the British engineers, and the officers of the piquets had orders to fire the mines in the event of the French attempting to force the passage.

CHAPTER VIII.

CAMPAIGNS OF 1811 IN THE PENINSULA.

THE winter passed in inaction, and on the 5th March 1811 Massena suddenly issued secret orders to his troops at Santarem to retire. The 43rd and 52nd officers with the piquets at the main bridge noticed that the enemy's posts had undergone a change and that the camp fires were not burning. So, reconnoitring across the bridge and causeway, and passing unchallenged the abattis with which the French had protected their front, they advanced towards a sentry, who appeared to be asleep on his post. To their astonishment, however, they found that the supposed Frenchman was nothing more than a carefully prepared dummy dressed in uniform, and that the enemy's troops had gone.

Next morning the Light Division started in pursuit ; and, continuing to press forward through Santarem and Pernes, the advanced guard came up with Marshal Ney's rearguard at Pombal on the 11th March. A sharp skirmish ensued, but Ney withdrew his troops without offering battle, preferring to make a stand on the following day at Redinha.

COMBAT OF REDINHA.

(12th March 1811).

Advancing northwards, the British approached an extensive hollow, or plain, among the hills, on the far side of which Ney had drawn up his rearguard on a slight eminence, covering the village of Redinha. To the north of the village flowed the river Redinha, passable by a long

causeway and narrow bridge, and north again of the river rose up a rugged height, upon which the French marshal had posted an ostensibly strong reserve, with orders to make itself evident. Across the bridge Massena's army was defiling at the moment the British appeared, and Ney, who was a master in the art of handling a rearguard, disposed his 5,000 or 6,000 men with his usual skill. His centre lay in the open across the head of the hollow, and his flanks rested on adjacent wooded slopes.

Wellington, observing the situation, directed the Light Division to attack the enemy's right and Picton's Division his left. Both flanks were soon driven in, but Ney still held his ground until the whole British army of 30,000 men began to advance in line across the plain. Then, intent on delaying to the last, he waited until his assailants charged, when he delivered a withering volley with his 5,000 muskets, and under cover of the smoke rapidly withdrew his troops in safety over the bridge by the side of the village, which was in flames before the British cavalry reached it. Thence, covered by his reserve on the heights above the bridge, he succeeded in making good his retreat to Condeixa. Both combatants lost a good number of men; the British 12 officers and 200 rank and file; and the French no fewer.

Before nightfall the Light Division was again in touch with the enemy's rearguard at Condeixa, but Wellington deemed it advisable to rest his troops after their hard day's work. Strange as it may seem, the small village was occupied, for the night, one half by the French piquets and the other half by the British, in tacit agreement not to molest one another. As an instance of the amenities of war, Sir George Napier relates the following incident:—

“ It was my friend Captain Mein of the 52nd who commanded our piquet; and when all was quiet and his sentinels posted and no fear of any surprise, he asked the captain commanding the enemy's piquet to have some supper with him, which the poor fellow, who had been half-starved for some months, was delighted to accept. So he

came to Mein's house, and after a good supper—for we had some sutlers come up to the army—and an hour or two of conversation, it was time for him to go back to his own piquet ; and he had not been gone above a quarter of an hour when he was ordered to retreat from his post. Our men, perceiving that the French sentinels were withdrawn, gave the alarm, and off started Mein with his piquet after his friend the French captain, firing at him as hard as he could. You see by this that there is never any personal animosity between soldiers opposed to each other in war, but I daresay it strikes you as very odd that men should shake hands with each other, drink and eat together, laugh and joke, and then in a few minutes use every exertion of mind and body to destroy one another. But so it is, and I hope always will be the case."

COMBAT OF CAZAL Novo.

(14th March 1811).

On the 13th the Light Division, still following Ney, bivouacked a league beyond Condeixa, part of which village the French had fired before evacuating it. The piquets, as usual, were posted for the night close up to those of the enemy, but in the darkness the French army slipped away in the direction of Miranda de Corvo. At daylight on the following morning the Light Division started in pursuit, and very soon came up with the rearguard near Cazal Novo. The 52nd were immediately sent forward to engage the enemy's light troops, posted in the numerous enclosures on the mountain side. A dense mist filled the valley, and the 52nd was for a time lost to view ; then, when the mist lifted, the regiment appeared to be alone in the midst of the French army. Wellington, coming to the front at this moment, recognized the danger, and ordered six companies of the 43rd, under Captain William Napier, to the rescue, when the fight began in earnest. Yet Ney was in so strong a position and held so wide a front, that the Light Division formed but a thin line of attack, without any reserve, and

consequently could make no headway, until Picton sent up reinforcements.

In the meantime Wellington had sent Cole's Division to turn Ney's left; and the bulk of the British infantry, with cavalry and artillery, coming up in the centre, made it evident to the French that they could tarry no longer. Neither was there any reason for further action, for the rearguard had carried out its mission, and Massena and the main body of the enemy were already well away to the rear. Then Ney once again set his force in motion, and with coolness and deliberation extricated it from a dangerous situation. Under cover of his guns and light troops, he retired leisurely from ridge to ridge, only towards the end of the day quickening his pace, when the British guns dashing forward found his range. And even then he succeeded in reaching the pass of Miranda de Corvo, where Massena had taken up a strong position to cover the withdrawal of his lieutenant.

The day had cost the Light Division alone eleven officers and one hundred and fifty men, but the French had suffered greater loss in killed and wounded, besides a hundred prisoners. Captain William Napier, of the 43rd, and Captain George Napier, of the 52nd, were among the officers wounded, and the latter gives the following account of a visit he received from a 52nd private whilst in hospital :—

" My servant came and told me that JOHN DUNN, an Irishman whom I had enlisted several years before, wished to see me. When he came into the room he immediately said ' Och, Captain, but I'm come to see how you and your brother is after the wounds. Didn't I see you knocked over by the bloody Frenchmen's shot? And sure I thought you was kilt. But myself knew you wouldn't be pleased if I didn't folly on after the villians, so I was afeared to go pick you up when ye was kilt, long life to you! But I pursued the inimy as long as I was able, and sure I couldn't do more; and now I'm come to see your honour, long life to you again.' I shook hands with him and said, ' But, John,

you seem wounded yourself; why is your arm tied up?' 'Och, nothing at all to prevent me coming to see your honour, and your honour's brother lying there, Captain William, long life to him! I hope he's not dead.' Upon insisting to know if he was wounded, at last he replied, 'Why sure it's nothing, only me arrum cut off a few hours ago below the elbow joint, and I couldn't come till the anguish was over a bit. But now I'm here, and thank God your honour's arrum is not cut off, for it's mighty cruel work; by Jasus, I'd rather be shot twenty times, though the doctor tould me he did it asy too, long life to his honour! I'm sure he didn't mean to hurt me all he could help!'"

"I then asked him for his brother, who was also a recruit of mine in my company, and an uncommonly fine, handsome, soldier as ever stepped, and who was a particular favourite of mine. He hesitated a few moments, and heaving a convulsive sob, said, 'I seed him shot through the heart alongside wid me just as I got the shot myself, and he looked up piteously in my face and said *Oh, John dear, my poor mother!* And sure I couldn't look at him again for the life of me, my heart was broke, and I came away to the rare. But, Captain, he died like a soldier, as your honour would wish him to die, and sure that's enough. He had your favour whilst he lived, God be with him, he's gone now.'"

AFFAIR OF FOZ D'ARONCE.

(15th March, 1811.)

On the evening of the fight at Cazal Novo, Massena became cognisant of the danger of remaining in his present position; he knew that he was being hard pressed, and he was afraid of being taken in rear. Consequently, as soon as darkness had set in, he instructed Ney to form a rear-guard, and setting fire to the village of Miranda, he retreated across the Ceira river. Fear of being delayed by his impedimenta induced him then to destroy his ammunition and baggage; and thus lightened, his army moved rapidly.

Ney had been instructed not on any account to risk a general action on the left bank of the river ; but, like his old opponent Craufurd, at the Coa, he either waited too long, or he disregarded his orders, and he was caught on the wrong side of the river, across which there was only one bridge for the retirement of a dozen battalions of infantry, a brigade of cavalry, and his artillery. He was, therefore, forced to fight in a position, which, though certainly stronger than that held by the British between Almeida and the Coa, had similar disadvantages. It was late in the evening when the Light Division found Ney's rearguard near the village of Foz D'ARONCE, and Wellington made up his mind to attack forthwith. The Light Division was ordered to hold the right of Ney's front, while the horse artillery was sent at a gallop to take up positions from which they could pour in a galling fire on the enemy's left wing. Never were the guns of the gallant Chestnut Troop better served, and so sudden and unexpected was the onslaught that the French, at the time busy cooking their evening meal, were seized with a panic and fled to the rear. The bridge was immediately blocked by the seething mass of men endeavouring to escape ; hundreds dashed wildly into the river, and were drowned ; while in the darkness mistaking friend for foe, the Frenchmen shot down their own comrades. Ney waited on the far side of the river to collect his men, and then blew up the bridge, and withdrew. When firing had ceased and the enemy had disappeared, the Light Division occupied the village, and thoroughly enjoyed the supper which their foes had unwittingly prepared for them.

In this manner the Light Division continued to follow close on Ney's rearguard, but the French general had learned discretion, and for the next fortnight refused to be drawn into a fight, always evacuating his position on seeing the British determined to advance. At length came the day when Wellington found Massena waiting for him, and desirous of giving battle.

COMBAT OF SABUGAL.

(3rd April, 1811.)

On the 1st April the French Marshal was discovered to be occupying a strong position behind the Coa, his centre at Sabugal, his right communicating with the fortress of Almeida, and his left covered by the river. Wellington, coming up, manœuvred for two days against the French right; then, at daybreak of the 3rd April, he suddenly issued orders for an attack in quite a different direction. The cavalry and the Light Division were sent post-haste to cross the Coa well above Sabugal, sweep round the French left, and cut in in rear of their centre. The 3rd Division at the same time was ordered to cross the river a little way above the bridge at Sabugal, which itself was to be forced by the 5th Division and the artillery, while two other Divisions were held in reserve. A dense mist hung over the valley, and prevented any cohesion in the attack, and Beckwith's brigade of the Light Division, after fording the deep and rapid river, found itself confronted by a steep, wooded hill. His orders were to attack, and though the rain was now falling fast and obscuring the movements of the rest of the troops, he pushed the four companies of the 95th Rifles up the wooded slope, the 43rd following close behind. Without realizing it, he was hurling his small force at the front of the French army consisting of "more than twelve thousand infantry, supported by cavalry and artillery." Napier gives a vivid account of the result:—

"Scarcely had the riflemen reached the top of the hill when a strong body of French drove them back upon the 43rd; the weather cleared at the instant, and Beckwith saw and felt all the danger, but his heart was too big to quail. With one fierce charge he beat back the enemy, and he gained and kept the summit of the hill, although two French howitzers poured showers of grape into his ranks, while a fresh force came against his front, and considerable bodies advanced on either flank. Fortunately, Reynier, little expecting to be attacked, had for the convenience of water

placed his main body in low ground behind the height on which the action commenced ; his renewed attacks were therefore up-hill, yet his musketry, heavy from the beginning, soon increased to a storm, and his men sprung up the acclivity with such violence and clamour it was evident that desperate fighting only could save the British from destruction, and they fought accordingly.

“ Captain Hopkins, commanding a flank company of the 43rd, running out to the right, with admirable presence of mind seized a small eminence, close to the French guns and commanding the ascent up which the French troops turning the right flank were approaching. His first fire threw them into confusion ; they rallied and were again disordered by his volleys ; a third time they made head ; but a sudden charge shook them, and then two battalions of the 52nd Regiment, attracted by the fire, entered the line. The centre and left of the 43rd were all this time furiously engaged, and wonderfully excited ; for Beckwith, with the blood streaming from a wound in the head, rode amongst the skirmishers, praising and exhorting them in a loud cheerful tone as a man sure to win his battle ; and though the bullets flew thicker and closer, and the fight became more perilous, the French fell fast and a second charge again cleared the hill. A howitzer was taken by the 43rd, and the skirmishers were descending in eager pursuit when small bodies of cavalry came galloping in from all parts and compelled them to take refuge with the main body, which had reformed behind a low stone wall ; one French squadron however, with incredible daring rode close to this wall, and were in the act of firing over it with pistols when a rolling volley laid nearly the whole lifeless on the ground. A very strong column of infantry then rushed up and endeavoured to retake the howitzer, which was on the edge of the descent, fifty yards from the wall, but no man could reach it and live, so deadly was the 43rd fire. Two English guns now came into action, and the 52nd charging violently upon the flank of the enemy’s infantry again vindicated the possession of the height ; nevertheless fresh squadrons

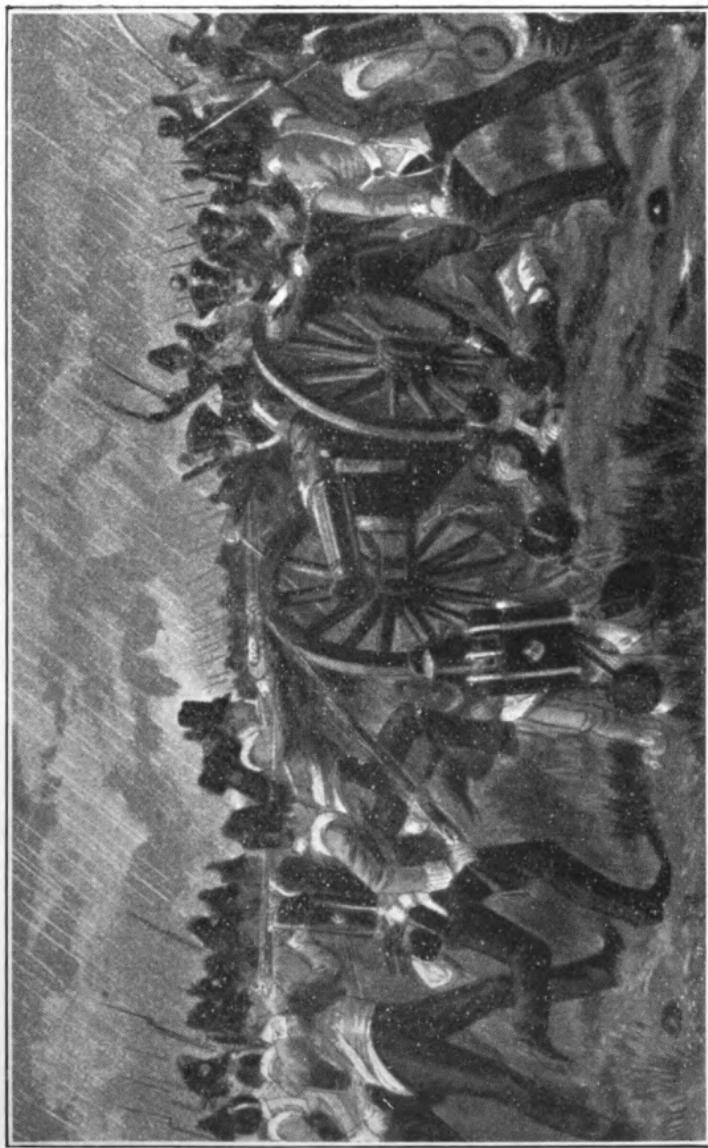
of cavalry, which had followed the infantry in the last attack, seeing the 52nd men scattered by this charge, flew upon them with great briskness and caused some disorder before they were repulsed."

Then the British reinforcements came up; the 5th Division had crossed the bridge; the cavalry were working round the enemy's flank; and the 3rd Division suddenly poured in such a heavy fire that Reynier, fearing that he would be surrounded, abandoned his design of recovering the hill, and beat a rapid retreat before pursuing cavalry. From first to last the struggle had lasted barely an hour, but it was an hour of deadly work. No fewer than three hundred of the enemy's dead were found on the summit of the hill in the immediate vicinity of the fateful howitzer, and twelve hundred wounded Frenchmen were left on the field. Of the British two hundred were killed or wounded, and these were mostly in the Light Division. The 43rd lost Lieut. McDiarmid, 2 sergeants and 11 rank and file, killed; Captains Dalzell and O'Flaherty, Lieutenants Rylance and Creighton, Ensign Carrol, and 40 rank and file, wounded. While the casualties in the 52nd amounted to 3 rank and file killed, and Captain P. Campbell, Lieutenant Gurwood, 1 sergeant and 17 rank and file, wounded.

Like the combat on the Coa, the action at Sabugal was a Light Division fight, and Wellington's despatch relating to it concluded with these words:—

"I consider that the action that was fought by the Light Division, by Colonel Beckwith's brigade principally, with the whole of the 2nd Corps, to be one of the most glorious that British troops were ever engaged in. The 43rd Regiment, under Major Patrickson, particularly distinguished themselves."

In later years Sabugal was remembered in the Regiment chiefly in connection with the captured howitzer, which furnished a subject of discussion, if not of dispute, among 43rd and 52nd officers. The 43rd officers claimed that they captured the howitzer, that they never lost it, and that one of them wrote a letter "from under the gun" after the



THE FIGHT FOR THE HOWITZER AT SABUGAI.

action. The 52nd officers, on the other hand, maintained that although the 43rd captured the howitzer, they were forced to abandon it, and that it was recaptured by a company of the 52nd commanded by Lieutenant J. F. Love. Furthermore, Lieutenant O'Hara, of the 52nd, it is related, took two hams and a keg of French brandy from the limber, and enjoyed a very pleasant supper with his brother officers after the hard day's work. After the lapse of a hundred years, however, we, the descendants of these 43rd and 52nd warriors, should feel proud to think that the howitzer of Sabugal was captured and kept by our ancestors "on both sides of the family," and we need not espouse the cause of the one side or of the other.

Among the many incidents of this fight we may mention that, when the battle was raging most fiercely, a sudden downpour of rain stopped all firing for a time, the powder in the priming pans of the old firelocks becoming too wet to be flashed by the flints. Such were the difficulties with which the soldiers of those times had to contend, and moreover when a man had discharged his muzzle-loading musket it took him some time to reload, so wild shooting was not much indulged in. An amusing story is told of the cunning of a 52nd private on this day. It happened that when the French cavalry charged the 52nd, Private Patrick Lowe, one of the skirmishers, found himself in danger of being ridden down by a French trooper. Being a man of ready resource and seeing a tree-stump a little way off, he ran for it, took shelter behind it, and covered the trooper with his musket. This had the desired result, for the Frenchman reined up; but to the surprise of the rest of the 52nd who were lining a wall close by, Lowe still remained covering him without firing. Then the regiment advanced and the trooper rode away unharmed, Lowe being abused by the officer as he passed by for allowing his foe to escape. "Is it shooting ye mane, Sir?" replied the private coolly. "Sure how could I shoot him when I wasn't loaded?"

After Sabugal the French army continued its retreat towards Ciudad Rodrigo and Salamanca, and on the 5th

April, Massena, leaving a French garrison of 1000 men, under General Brenier, in the fortress of Almeida, quitted Portugal. The Light Division followed over the frontier, and four days later went into cantonments at Gallegos, the bulk of Wellington's troops remaining behind the Coa. Thus the situation of the opposing armies in this part of the Peninsula, except for the foothold maintained by the French in Almeida, became practically the same as that of a year before. In that year Massena had forced Wellington to withdraw to Lisbon; and Wellington, in turn, had driven Massena back to Ciudad Rodrigo. There had been some hard fighting, and much arduous marching, accompanied by privations of every description, but neither the Allies nor the French were substantially the worse. Both were unbeaten, and both were still eager for the fray.

THE MARIALVA PIQUET.

Almeida was now blockaded by the Allies, and the Light Division once again took up the line of outposts upon the Agueda. This duty was more hazardous now than on the previous occasion, because it was deemed certain that the French from Ciudad Rodrigo would make an attempt to relieve the garrison of Almeida, and at daybreak on the 23rd of April the enemy made a reconnaissance, with two battalions of infantry and some cavalry, towards the Azava river, a tributary of the Agueda and flowing parallel with it at a distance of some six miles. The point aimed at by the reconnaissance was the bridge of Marialva, which spanned the Azava close to its junction with the Agueda. A little below the bridge was the ford of Molinos dos Flores and these two passages were held by a company of the 52nd, and a detachment of the 95th Rifles, the ford, considered of consequence, being the Captain's post. On the 22nd April, Captain Robert Campbell's company formed the piquet, having a subdivision of the 52nd under Lieutenant Dawson and a similar party of the 95th under Lieutenant Eeles at the bridge. Captain John Dobbs, of the 52nd, in his

Narrative of the Peninsular War, gives an account of the affair, in which his brother played a conspicuous part:—

“The relieving piquet always arrived an hour before daylight, both piquets remaining under arms till the daylight enabled them to ascertain that there was no enemy in sight. On the 23rd April, 1811, my brother’s (Captain Joseph Dobbs’) company being the relieving one was under arms with the old piquet, also a company of the 52nd, he being in command of the whole, stationed at the ford and bridge. Just as daylight appeared, he heard a heavy firing at the bridge. As a heavy fall of rain had taken place during the night it struck him that the ford was not passable; and having ascertained that this was the case, he left a corporal and three men to watch it, and dashed off with the remainder to the bridge. He arrived most opportunely, the enemy having forced the passage. Seeing the state of affairs whilst coming over the heights above the bridge, he charged down on the enemy, who supposing that he was only the advance of a large force, gave way and recrossed the bridge; on which my brother established his men amongst the rocks on one side of the river, keeping up such a fire on the bridge that they were unable to force the passage a second time.

“The manner of advance was rather singular. A drummer led, beating what we had nicknamed “Old Trousers”; as long as he survived they continued to advance, but as soon as he fell they immediately turned tail and ran back, when they had to go over the same process for another attack. This continued for a considerable length of time, until we, the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 52nd, were able to come to the relief of the piquet, when the enemy returned to their main body at Ciudad Rodrigo.

“It may be supposed how much my brother exposed himself when I state that he had a shot through his cap, another through his jacket, another cutting the flap of his trousers across, and another on the blade of his sabre, now in my possession.

“If the enemy had succeeded in their attack on the

bridge much mischief might have been done, as all our Horse Artillery horses were out foraging, and their cavalry would have got into our quarters at Gallegos before their return, and before we were prepared for their reception."

The French lost a considerable number of men, and the 52nd had Ensign Pritchard, one sergeant, and 14 rank and file wounded. The attack on the bridge was repeated on the following day, but was again repulsed, the piquet (another company of the 52nd) having two sergeants and eight rank and file wounded.

After these failures to find a weak spot in the British outpost line, Massena came to the conclusion that it would be wiser to leave alone the several unfordable rivers which intersected the country between Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and attempt to relieve the latter fortress by moving wider to the south, where the rivers narrowed and were thus more negotiable. Wellington, becoming aware of his adversary's intentions, left Almeida to be watched by a British regiment and a Portuguese brigade, and concentrated the remainder of his force between the rivers Turon and Duas Casas, to await developments.

On the 3rd May the enemy was discovered to be advancing in some strength towards the upper waters of the Duas Casas, and in the evening the French made an attack on the village of Fuentes d'Onor (or Fuentes de Onoro), but were driven off by the British troops in the vicinity. On the following day, Massena strengthened his left and pushed forward further south, into the more open country, where his strong body of cavalry could be used to advantage.

BATTLE OF FUENTES D'ONOR.

(5th May, 1811.)

The Light Division, which some days before had been placed in support behind the left centre of the position, was moved to the right, early on the morning of 5th May, to support the 7th Division and the British cavalry, and shortly afterwards the French infantry commenced the

attack. Before long, the 7th Division was forced to give way before two of Massena's Corps, and though the situation was saved by the timely arrival of the 95th Rifles, five thousand of the enemy's cavalry burst into the plain, and turning the right of the 7th Division, charged furiously at the British cavalry which numbered no more than a thousand sabres. To continue in the words of Napier :—

" The French, therefore, with one shock drove in all the outguards, cut off Norman Ramsay's battery of horse artillery, and came sweeping in upon the reserves and the 7th Division. Their leading squadrons, approaching in a loose manner, were partially checked by the British, and then a great commotion was observed in their main body. Their troopers were seen closing with disorder and tumult towards one point, where a thick dust arose, and where loud cries and the sparkling of blades and flashing of pistols indicated some extraordinary occurrence. Suddenly the crowd became violently agitated, an English shout pealed high and clear ; the mass was rent asunder, and Norman Ramsay burst forth sword in hand at the head of his battery, his horses breathing fire, stretched like greyhounds along the plain, the guns bounded behind them like things of no weight, and the mounted gunners followed close, with heads bent low and pointed weapons in desperate career. At this sight Brotherton, of the 14th Dragoons, instantly galloped to his aid with a squadron, shocked the head of the pursuing troops, and General Charles Stewart, joining in the charge took the French colonel, Lamotte, fighting hand to hand. However, the main body came forward rapidly, and the British cavalry retired behind the Light Division, which was thrown into squares."

This was a somewhat novel formation for light troops, but so excellently were they trained that the regiments, in solid squares, withdrew across the plain in perfect order, and the French dragoons never dared to ride within musket shot of them. While this was in progress Wellington made fresh dispositions of his army, taking up a position across the rocky ridge which connected the valleys of the Duas

Casas and the Turon, and which fronted towards the plain. But it was a hazardous moment, as the French cavalry was ever threatening, and their infantry, pressing the attack at one point, carried the greater part of the village of Fuentes. The 3rd Division, however, held tenaciously to the church and the upper houses, and, towards evening a brigade of the Light Division (with which was the 52nd) was sent down to reinforce, when the enemy was pushed back to the far side of the river.

At nightfall the fighting ceased. No truce had been actually arranged, but, as was so frequently the case in this war, the engagement was broken off more or less by mutual consent, the French outposts in this part of the field lining the one bank of the Duas Casas while the British outposts lined the other bank. And it was agreed between the officers of the opposing piquets that their men might take water from the river without molestation, but that the river was not to be crossed. During the night a French sergeant was taken prisoner on the British side of the river, and was brought before Captain J. F. Love, who commanded the 52nd piquet. On being questioned, the prisoner confessed that he had come over the river to take leave of a Spanish girl in the village. "Love, sir," he added, "has made me your prisoner."

"Well then," was the reply, "we will not be hard on you for once. Go back to your captain, and tell him that, if Love got you into this scrape, Love gets you out again. My name is Love, and you will not forget it."

The British position, naturally a strong one, was made doubly so before the following morning by the addition of breastworks, and Massena, observing at daylight what had been done, began to think that the relief of Almeida from this direction was hopeless. Throughout the 6th May, he hovered about, in search of a weak point in Wellington's defences, but finding none, he withdrew his army, on the morning of the 7th, towards the Agueda. The Light Division followed to Espeja and Gallegos, thus returning once more to the old line of outposts.

Two days later the French in Almeida blew up the fortifications, and, breaking through the blockading force at night, succeeded in escaping, with the loss of only some 300 prisoners. There was now, therefore, no longer any particular object for the enemy to wish to enter Portugal again; moreover, Marshal Marmont, who had succeeded Massena in command of the French army, after replenishing Ciudad Rodrigo with stores and munitions of war, prepared to march south and join forces with Marshal Soult, for the relief of the fortress of Badajoz, then being besieged by the Allies, under Beresford. Wellington himself went off to Badajoz, to superintend the operations, and took two divisions with him; while Sir Brent Spencer remained in command of the other divisions opposite Ciudad Rodrigo, with instructions to join Wellington in the event of Marmont moving to unite with Soult.

On the 6th June Marmont advanced towards Gallegos and Espeja, and the Light Division withdrew across the plain to Alsyates, Spencer retiring behind the Coa. The French then crossed the Sierra de Gata, and the British, following a more westerly route, eventually reached the Caya River, near Campo Mayor, on the 23rd June, and joined Wellington's army, already drawn off from the siege of Badajoz. Marmont's junction with Soult had rendered Wellington's plans for the capture of the fortress impossible to carry out, since the French outnumbered the allies by nearly three to one. All that Wellington could now do was to maintain a bold front in the vicinity of Campo Mayor, and avoid a battle. And he was so successful in deceiving the enemy as to his inferiority in numbers that the French marshals made no attempt to deliver the blow which would probably have been fatal to their adversary, but retired and separated.

For four weeks the Light Division remained on the fever-laden banks of the Caya, and then, when Marmont had withdrawn to Salamanca, Wellington retraced his steps towards Ciudad Rodrigo, the Light Division taking up various posts about the Agueda river on the 9th August.

The British general had determined on the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, and the place was immediately blockaded, preparatory to an actual siege ; but Marmont soon moved down to the relief of the garrison with a powerful army, and in September Wellington was forced to retire to the Coa. For a short time the French cavalry were aggressive, and two small engagements took place—at El Boden and at Aldea de Ponte—but before long Marmont returned to Salamanca. During the remainder of the year the Light Division was quartered a few miles to the south of Ciudad Rodrigo, about the villages of Zamarra, Atalaya, and Las Agallas ; and in December, the men were employed in making fascines and gabions for the coming siege of the fortress.

CHAPTER IX.

CAMPAIGNS OF 1812 IN THE PENINSULA.

(Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca.)

No long time was wasted in winter quarters, for with the opening days of the year Wellington was up and doing. During the previous few weeks he had discovered much about the French forces in the field ; he learned that Napoleon had taken away a great number of men for his movement against Russia ; and he knew that lack of provisions in Spain had obliged the French generals to distribute their commands over wide areas of country. CIUDAD RODRIGO lay before him, and he was confident that the garrison could not rely on receiving succour within any measurable length of time. "Seeing in fine," says Napier, "that opportunity was ripe, Lord Wellington leaped with both feet on Ciudad Rodrigo."

By the 8th January the investment of the fortress was complete, and the siege commenced forthwith.

SIEGE AND STORMING OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

The Agueda river, flowing north-west, at one point almost washed the base of the walls of Ciudad Rodrigo, standing on its right (or eastern) bank, and Wellington's troops had to cross the river before arriving within striking distance of the fortifications. The French, since their occupation of the place, had busied themselves in improving the defences and in throwing up earthworks. Beyond the fortress walls on the east lay the suburb of San Francisco, surrounded by an entrenchment, which was flanked at the northern angle by the fortified convent of the same

name, and at the southern angle by another fortified convent—San Domingo. Immediately north of the fortress were two parallel ridges, known as the Greater Teson and Lesser Teson. On the former the enemy had constructed a redoubt (Francisco), supported by two guns and a howitzer placed on the roof of the convent close by, and it was against these defences that Wellington decided to strike. His object was to drive the enemy from the Francisco Redoubt and adjacent convent, and then, on the slopes of the Greater Teson, to establish his first siege trenches and batteries, with the intention of breaching the walls, pushing his trenches across the Lesser Teson, and ultimately delivering the assault by which he hoped to capture the fortress. From no other quarter beyond musketry range of the garrison could he bring his breaching batteries to bear directly on the walls, but before anything could be done, it was necessary to seize the redoubt and convent of San Francisco.

At daybreak on the 8th January the Light Division marched north from El Boden, and at noon, together with Pack's Portuguese, forded the Agueda, after which, taking a somewhat circuitous route they got into position beyond the Greater Teson ridge. Here they remained all day; and the Frenchmen, never suspecting that this was the commencement of serious operations, stood on the walls and waved their hats to them. But within a few hours the defenders of the redoubt learned a bitter lesson.

Wellington's great plan was now about to be put into execution, and at nightfall orders were issued for the **ASSAULT OF THE FRANCISCO REDOUBT.** COLONEL COLBORNE, of the 52nd, was placed in command of the troops destined for the assault, and was instructed to make his own arrangements. He took with him four companies of the 52nd, two of the 43rd, two of the 95th, and two of each battalion of the Caçadores, the captain of each company receiving definite orders as to how he should act. Everything went like clockwork, and in perfect silence the column advanced rapidly, the garrison of the redoubt having no

suspicion of what was taking place within a few yards of them, until they heard the assailants rushing forward to the crest of the glacis. The defenders had time only to discharge one round from their guns, ere they were overwhelmed by the musketry fire from the glacis. The escalading ladders were then brought up and lowered into the ditch; the assaulting companies descended with all haste, replaced the ladders against the parapet, and in another minute entered the place from all sides. Few of the enemy remained to dispute the possession of the redoubt, and those few were speedily made prisoners; but no sooner did the capture of the outwork become known in Ciudad Rodrigo than the guns of the fortress plied the redoubt with shot and shell, in the hope of driving the British out. Yet so assiduously did the remainder of the besiegers labour throughout the night that, by daybreak next morning, six hundred yards of siege trench had been constructed right across the Greater Teson.

Day by day the gigantic work was continued, three divisions, besides the Light Division, taking it in turn to excavate the trenches. The defenders, well supplied with ammunition, kept up a steady fire on the diggers, who laboured day and night. Nearer and nearer to the doomed fortress drew the parallels; each night fresh ground was broken by the twelve hundred men of the working party; communications were excavated, and counter-batteries thrown up in readiness for the siege guns; and all this in the intense cold of winter and under a storm of fire from the fortress.

SIR GEORGE NAPIER, relating his experiences as a Major in the 52nd, gives the following instance of the courage of his men:—

“About three weeks before the assault of the town I was field officer of the trenches, and was standing with some men who were digging a trench, when a thirteen-inch shell from the town fell in the midst of us. I called to the men to lie down flat on the ground, as by that means most probably few, if any, would receive injury. The men,

knowing this, instantly obeyed orders, and lay flat, except one of them, an Irishman and an old Marine, but a most worthless, drunken dog, who ran up to the shell, the fuze of which was still burning, and striking it a blow with his spade, knocked it out, and taking the immense shell in his hands came and presented it to me, saying, 'There she is for you now, your honour. By Jasus, she'll do you no harm, since I knocked the life out of the cratur.' I never saw a cooler thing, and of course was *obliged* to give him a dollar, and leave to get drunk if he got safe home to the cantonments."

While this laborious work was in progress news came that Marmont was marching to the succour of the garrison. There was, therefore, no time to be wasted, and on the 13th January, Wellington placed twenty-eight guns in the batteries, and ordered them forthwith to breach the walls, so that the assault might be delivered without further delay. In the ordinary course of the siege, the trenches would have been pushed gradually forward to the very edge of the ditch, which would have been mined and blown in, in order to give easier access to the assaulting column ; but in the present case this would have taken too long, and every effort was now made to batter the walls in two places. It was necessary to make a lesser breach by which a small party should establish a footing on the ramparts, and a great breach for the main assault to be delivered. The guns rained shot after shot at the two selected portions of wall, and the stone-work was seen to gradually crumble away ; while the enemy replied with a cannonade from fifty guns.

On the night of the 14th January, the convent and suburb of San Francisco were carried and occupied, when the second parallel was extended and fresh batteries thrown up. Three days later the siege trenches had been excavated to within two hundred yards of the fortress ; pits were dug close up to the ditch, and riflemen were posted in them ; two formidable breaches were made in the walls ; and a continuous fire of grape and canister, aided by the fire of

the riflemen in the pits, was poured against the faces of the breaches, in order to prevent any attempt of the garrison to repair the damage.

Wellington now felt that the fortress was at his mercy, and he sent in to demand its surrender. The reply of the Governor was such as was to be expected from a soldier who had made so gallant a defence—that surrender was out of the question, and that he and his brave garrison were prepared to perish amid the ruins of the fortress. From this reply it was evident that the French intended to fight to the bitter end, and though the British general would willingly have spared the lives of his own troops and of the enemy, he realized that only one course lay open to him, *viz* :—to strike while the iron was hot, and before Marmont appeared on the scenes. On the 18th, therefore, a careful reconnaissance was made by the headquarter staff, with the result that Wellington determined to storm Rodrigo on the following night.

The orders issued on the morning of the eventful day were clear in every detail. Maturely considered instructions were given to the commander of each body of men to be engaged in the desperate work, and all had sufficient time during the day to think out the situation, and to decide how best to execute the orders of their chief. The troops selected for the enterprise consisted of the Third Division, the Light Division, and Pack's Brigade of Portuguese, the whole being divided into four columns—the Right Attack, the Great Breach, the Left Attack, and the False Attack. For the Right Attack were detailed Colonel O'Toole's Caçadores and three British regiments, the Portuguese being ordered to issue from the houses close by the bridge over the Agueda, rush forward to the fortress walls near the Castle, and (there being no ditch at this point) gain an entry by escalade; while the British regiments, posted behind the convent of Santa Cruz, were to advance to the front, drop into the ditch, and, with the help of the ladders, work their way towards the left and gain the great breach in the centre. The Great Breach was to be carried by

Mackinnon's Brigade of the Third Division; the Left Attack to be made, from the direction of San Francisco convent, by the Light Division; and the False Attack was to take the form of an escalade, on the opposite side of the fortress, by Pack's Portuguese Brigade.

Seven o'clock in the evening was the time appointed for the assault to commence, and by that hour all the troops were ready at their posts, waiting only for the word to advance. The night was fine and clear, a young moon shedding a glimmer of light over the scene. Dense black masses of men stood silently in the trenches; away in front rose up the great fortress, the breaches in its walls distinctly visible; not a sound was to be heard in any direction, for the defenders' guns were, for the time being, quiet. At length came relief to the pent-up feelings of the assailants, and a few minutes after the appointed time, the order to advance was passed along in an undertone. Then, as one great wave, the several columns swept towards Rodrigo.

The portion of the work against which the 3rd and the Light Division hurled themselves was covered by what is known as a *fausse braye*, or advanced line of parapet and ditch, parallel to but lower than the main rampart and ditch of the fortress, thus enabling the defenders to sweep with a double tier of fire the glacis, or open slope, up which the assailants must advance to reach the ditch. The breaches described as having been formed were in the main walls, and it was necessary, before reaching them, to surmount the obstacle presented by the ditch and parapet of the *fausse braye*. In other words, the assailants had to advance to the foot of the glacis, rush up its fireswept slope, jump into the *fausse braye* ditch, clamber up its parapet, descend into the main ditch, and then charge up the mass of masonry lying in the bottom of the breach. With what gallantry the British soldiers undertook this desperate task has been often told; yet it is worthy of being told again.

To Major George Napier, of the 52nd, had been given, that morning, the command of the Storming Party, to precede the Light Division to the assault of the lesser

breach. He was instructed to go to the three British regiments of the Division, and ask for one hundred volunteers from each, to form the Storming Party. Almost the entire Division volunteered, and the required 300 that were taken were considered by the others as favoured by fortune. No sooner did Craufurd give the order to advance than Napier's stormers were away, declining to wait for the party that had been told off to accompany them with sacks of hay, wherewith to form a passage across the ditches. Covering the 300 yards of open ground in the space of a few minutes, they broke over the glacis, and, despite the shower of grape and musketry from the resolute garrison, reached the edge of the *fausse braye* ditch. To hesitate meant certain death, but hesitation had never occurred to anyone. Below him each man saw, in the semi-darkness, an apparently-bottomless abyss ; grasping his musket the firmer, and thinking only of the capture of the fortress, he leapt down the eleven feet, and then, in the face of a heavy fire, rushed up the opposite parapet. In this manner the stormers of the Light Division, joined by the *Forlorn Hope* (commanded by LIEUTENANT GURWOOD, of the 52nd), reached the lesser breach. Over the jumble of fallen masonry, and up through the funnel-shaped gap in the wall, the men pressed forward, becoming each moment more closely packed. The enemy standing at the top received them with a storm of musketry and grape ; Napier, at the head of his men, dropped with a shattered arm, but, as he did so shouted to the stormers to charge with the bayonet ; the officers rushed to the front, and with one wild shout the breach was carried.

The regiments of the Light Division which had followed in support close behind the stormers now advanced rapidly through the breach on to the ramparts, and wheeling to the right and left, drove the enemy before them. The 43rd, working along the ramparts, soon reached the top of the Great Breach, where the fight was still at its fiercest. Simultaneously with the advance of the Light Division, the 3rd Division, preceded by its stormers, rushed for the Great

Breach, clearing the *fausse braye* with astounding rapidity, and becoming blocked at the foot of the breach of the ramparts. The Frenchmen, driven back behind their inner retrenchments and into the neighbouring houses, kept up a withering fire on the assaulting column ; while two guns poured grape on the seething mass of men at a distance of barely a dozen yards. The piled up bodies of officers and men, thus mown down, effectually choked the breach and prevented any forward rush. At this anxious moment the 43rd appeared on the ramparts ; the enemy wavered ; and straining every nerve for a final effort, the 3rd Division burst through the breach, and drove the Frenchmen into the town. Ciudad Rodrigo had fallen, for success had crowned the efforts of the Portuguese troops also, and the fortress was entered from all sides.

With such impetuosity was the assault delivered that barely half an hour was occupied in the capture of the fortress. The garrison, after a short resistance in the streets, sought refuge in the citadel, which soon surrendered, when Lieutenant Gurwood took the Governor prisoner and conveyed his sword to Lord Wellington. To mark his appreciation of Gurwood's services in leading the Forlorn Hope, Wellington then and there presented him with the sword of the captured Governor.

The losses on both sides were enormous, and in the fatal half hour the French had 300 killed and 1500 made prisoners, while of the assailants 90 officers and 1200 men were numbered among the killed and wounded. The casualties in the 43rd consisted of LIEUTENANT BRUMWELL, and 14 men killed, and Captain Fergusson, Lieutenant Pattenson, and 37 men wounded. The 52nd, both of whose battalions took part in the assault, suffered equally, having CAPTAIN JOSEPH DOBBS and 8 men killed, and Colonel Colborne, Major George Napier, Captain Mein, Lieutenants Woodgate and Gurwood, and 38 men wounded. But the loss most deeply felt by the Regiments of the Light Division, as well as by the whole army, was that of MAJOR-GENERAL ROBERT CRAUFURD, who received his death-wound shortly after the assault commenced.

That night Ciudad Rodrigo was sacked, but next morning the joys of victory were supplanted by grief, when officers and men stood bare-headed, among the débris of the Great Breach, watching the removal for burial of the corpses of their gallant comrades. A few days later, at the lesser breach an even more touching scene was enacted, when Craufurd, the great commander of the Light Division, was buried with military honours. Six sergeant-majors of the regiments of the Division carried the coffin, and six field officers acted as pall-bearers, while Lord Wellington and every available officer of the army, as well as the whole of the Light Division, were present at the graveside.

SIEGE AND STORMING OF BADAJOZ.

No sooner had Wellington captured Rodrigo than he made up his mind to again invest BADAJOZ, which had so far defied all his efforts. Leaving a Spanish garrison in Ciudad Rodrigo, early in March he moved his army south, and by the 16th of the month he had placed a cordon of fifteen thousand men around Badajoz. On the 17th March the Light Division left Elvas, the bugles of the different regiments appropriately enlivening the march with "St. Patrick's Day in the Morning." Never were men in finer fettle than were the British soldiers who, with the storming of Rodrigo still fresh in their minds, advanced on Badajoz. They knew well that the capture of the fortress would entail hard fighting, for so strong was it that twice in the last twelve months had a portion of the British army invested it and been forced to leave it alone. On this occasion, however, Wellington intended that there should be no chance of failure, and, aware from previous experience of the difficulties confronting him, he arranged every detail with the utmost care.

Badajoz at this time was probably the strongest fortress on the Spanish frontier. It was situated on the south bank of the Guadiana, a broad and deep river, which was considered to be sufficient protection from an attack from the north. On that side, therefore, the defences of the fortress

itself consisted only of a simple rampart. On all other sides the fortifications were formidable, having regular bastioned fronts, with solid masonry parapets, encircled by a ditch in places thirty feet deep. Within the north-east angle of the fortress stood the ancient castle, built on a hillock one hundred feet in height, and overlooking the Guadiana, yet, in its turn, overlooked by the high ground (barely 500 yards distant) to the north of the river. In order to guard against the possibility of an enemy's artillery occupying these heights and demolishing the Castle, a detached fort, known as St. Christoval, had been built on them ; while, on the opposite side of Badajoz, were two other detached works—Pardaleras on the south, and Picurina on the south-east. Between Picurina and the fortress flowed the Rivillas stream, crossed by a stone bridge protected by the St. Roque lunette, and at this bridge the French had formed a dam, thus producing, in front of the south-east portion of the fortifications, an inundation some 200 yards in width.

In the two previous sieges Wellington had directed his attack from the north, intending first to capture St. Christoval, in order to establish batteries there, preparatory to an assault on the Castle. Now he adopted a new plan ; and, although aware of the obstacle created by the inundation, he decided on the capture of the Picurina redoubt, from which he hoped to be able to breach the bastions of Trinidad and Santa Maria, which lay immediately opposite, and to make a third breach between the two. The breaches effected, he proposed to form up his assaulting columns under cover of the hills to the south-west of Picurina, and so avoid the inundation.

Crossing the Guadiana by the bridge of boats some four miles from Elvas, and continuing the march for another ten miles, the two brigades of the Light Division took up their allotted positions in the investing lines, just out of range of the Badajoz guns. That night the working parties, under cover of darkness and in a blinding storm, crept up to within 160 yards of Fort Picurina, and (the noise of their picks and shovels being drowned by the wind and rain)

succeeded in excavating the first parallel, 600 yards in length, before daybreak, and before the defenders had discovered their presence.

Day by day the siege trenches lessened the distance to the fort, and on the night of the 25th March the 52nd carried it by assault. Batteries were then established in Picurina and in the vicinity, and the breaching of the walls of the fortress commenced in earnest. Ten days later the gaps in the walls had grown to sufficient dimensions to be ready for the assault to take place, and on the night of the 6th April occurred one of the most bloody struggles in the annals of war—a struggle the horrors of which lived in the memories of the surviving assailants for ever afterwards.

In the bivouacs of the Light Division the day had been spent in preparing for the work of the night, the men cleaning themselves and their accoutrements, as if for a review, for in those days it was a point of honour to go into battle neat and trim. High were the spirits of everyone, and many the plans formed for revelry in "Badahoo," after clearing it of the enemy. At 8.30 p.m. the 43rd fell in; the roll was called in an undertone, and COLONEL MACLEOD addressed the men quietly and earnestly, impressing on every one the importance of preserving discipline both during the assault and after the place had been captured. Then the 43rd silently marched off and joined the other regiments of the Light Division, drawn up within 300 yards of the three breaches. The night was dark, and absolute silence prevailed; for an hour no sound broke the stillness—save the loud croakings of the frogs. Everyone waited impatiently for the order to advance. The clock in the town tolled out the hour of ten, and the sentinels on the ramparts gave their usual cry, "*Sentinelle, garde à vous.*" Then, suddenly, from the bastion of Santa Maria a fire-ball flew high into the air and cast its light over the whole surrounding country. It was evident that the enemy expected an attack.

The Storming Party which preceded the Division consisted, as at Ciudad Rodrigo, of a hundred volunteers from

each regiment, headed by the Forlorn Hope, commanded by LIEUTENANT H. HARVEST of the 43rd. These now crept rapidly forward to the edge of the ditch, in order to place the ladders and grass-bags, for the advance of the Division. Two minutes later the latter followed in close column, with the 4th Division marching alongside, a little to the right. The fortress was still silent ; then, a single musket shot rang out, and again all was still. The three ladders were placed down the counterscarp, the Forlorn Hope had descended into the ditch, and the Storming Party were in the act of descending, when suddenly a terrific explosion took place at the foot of the breaches, and the burst of light showed, for a few seconds, the whole scene. The parapets were thronged with Frenchmen, prepared to resist the assault ; while the two English divisions were scrambling in hot haste down the ladders into the ditch. A galling fire—both grape-shot and musketry—rained from the ramparts, and the men, eager to close with the enemy, could not be restrained from leaping headlong into the chasm below.

Napier, the historian, shall relate what followed. He says :—

“ Now a multitude bounded up the great breach as if driven by a whirlwind : but across the top glittered a range of sword blades, sharp-pointed, keen-edged, immovably fixed in ponderous beams chained together and set deep in the ruins ; and for ten feet in front the ascent was covered with loose planks studded with iron points, on which the feet of the foremost being set the planks slipped, and the unhappy soldiers falling forward on the spikes rolled down upon the ranks behind. Then the Frenchmen, shouting at the success of their stratagem and leaping forward, plied their shot with terrible rapidity, for every man had several muskets, and each musket in addition to its ordinary charge contained a small cylinder of wood stuck full of leaden slugs, which scattered like hail when they were discharged.

“ Once and again the assailants rushed up the breaches,

but the sword blades, immovable and impassable, always stopped the charge, and the hissing shells and thundering powder-barrels exploded unceasingly. Hundreds of men had fallen, hundreds more were dropping, yet the heroic officers still called aloud for new trials, and sometimes followed by many, sometimes by few, ascended the ruins ; and so furious were the men themselves, that in one of these charges the rear strove to push the foremost on to the sword blades, willing even to make a bridge of their writhing bodies ; the others frustrated the attempt by dropping down, yet men fell so fast from the shot it was hard to say who went down voluntarily, who were stricken, and many stooped unhurt who never rose again. Vain also would it have been to break through the sword blades ; for a finished trench and parapet were behind the breach, where the assailants, crowded even into a narrower space than the ditch was, would still have been separated from their enemies, and the slaughter have continued."

In one of these desperate charges on the sword blades, CHARLES MACLEOD, the colonel of the 43rd, was shot dead, but the loss of their officers and of their comrades in the ranks only served to make the men more eager to force a way into the work. They refused to acknowledge themselves defeated, and they continued to crush up the breach in one compact mass. Yet, such bravery was of no avail. The Light Division was being speedily destroyed, and a similar fate was falling on the 4th Division near at hand.

"In this dreadful situation, while the dead were lying in heaps, and others continually falling, the wounded crawling about to get some shelter from the merciless shower above, and withal a sickening stench from the burnt flesh of the slain, Captain Nicholas, of the Engineers, was observed by LIEUTENANT SHAW, of the 43rd, making incredible efforts to force his way with a few men into the Santa Maria. Collecting fifty soldiers of all regiments, he joined him, and passing a deep cut along the foot of this breach, these two young officers, at the head of their band, rushed up the slope of the ruins, but ere they gained two-thirds of the ascent, a

concentrated fire of musketry and grape dashed nearly the whole dead to the earth. Nicholas was mortally wounded, and the intrepid Shaw stood alone!"

Soon after this it was realized that the assault on the breaches had failed, and at midnight Wellington ordered the troops to withdraw to the glacis, and re-form for another attempt. He was determined that, in spite of the losses which he had suffered, he would carry the fortress before daybreak. He was aware that the 3rd Division had already captured the Castle, and that the 5th Division and the Portuguese were still struggling to effect an entrance on their side. And success crowned their efforts, for before the gallant troops of the Light and 4th Divisions again advanced, shouts of victory came from the walls, and proclaimed that Badajoz had fallen.

But the triumph was gained at a fearful cost, the British and Portuguese losing upwards of 300 officers and 5000 men. Nearly half the Light Division perished, and it is recorded that the 43rd and 52nd alone lost more men than did the whole seven regiments of the 3rd Division engaged at the Castle, while the casualties in the 43rd were higher than in any other regiment of the army, though the 52nd lost only an officer and a man less. Twenty officers and 335 sergeants and men of the 43rd were stricken down, of whom one-fifth were killed in the breach, and many subsequently died of their wounds. LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MACLEOD, commanding the Regiment, LIEUTENANT H. HARVEST, commanding the Forlorn Hope, and LIEUTENANT TAGGART were amongst the killed, while Lieutenant Hodgson was mortally wounded. There were wounded also—some severely, others slightly—Major John Wells, Captains Fergusson, Johnston and Strode, Lieutenants Pollock, Rideout, Capel, W. Freer, E. Freer, Oglander, Wyndham Madden, James Considine, Baillie, O'Connell, and Cooke, and Ensign Wilkinson.

"Macleod, who had only attained his twenty-seventh year, was buried amid springing corn, on the slope of a hill opposite to the regimental camp. Six sorrowing hearts, the

only officers of the 43rd able to stand, laid him in his grave. His brother officers, desirous of recording their affection and respect, erected to his memory, in Westminster Abbey, a monument, on which is engraved the following extract from Lord Wellington's Despatch :—

In Lieut.-Colonel Macleod, of the 43rd Regiment, who was killed in the breach, His Majesty has sustained the loss of an officer who was an ornament to his profession, and was capable of rendering the most important services to his country."

The 52nd lost in the actual assault 19 officers and 334 of other ranks, of whom 5 officers and 53 men were killed, including CAPTAINS W. JONES, WILLIAM MADDEN, and POOLE, and Lieutenants CHARLES BOOTH and ROYLE; while amongst the wounded were Majors Gibbs and Mein, Captains R. Campbell, Merry and Ewart, Lieutenants McNair, Kinloch, Yorke, Blackwood, Davies, Royds, and Barlow, and Ensigns Nixon, Hall, and Gawler.

One thing only detracted from the glory of this magnificent victory ; the regimental officers remaining fit for duty were too few to control their men, and it was impossible to restrain the fierce spirits of the soldiers who had dared so much and suffered so severely. Once they saw that Badajoz was theirs, they lost all control of themselves, and were seized with absolute madness. The wine stores were broken into, drunkenness reigned supreme, and every species of vile crime was perpetrated. For three days this terrible state of affairs continued, the town being sacked, and in many parts set on fire by the frenzied soldiery, and order was eventually restored not by control, but rather by the exhaustion of the madmen whose "wild and desperate wickedness tarnished the lustre of the soldier's heroism." Except for this unfortunate ending the storming of Badajoz would have been remembered as the most glorious enterprise of the war. As it was, for years afterwards men shuddered at the name, recalling only those dreadful days which followed the victory. But out of the evil in a measure came good ; for, although at San Sebastian in the

following year similar horrors were enacted, the officers gradually learned how to control their men ; and the lesson lived, otherwise, when forty-six years afterwards, Delhi was captured, the 52nd and other British regiments might have followed the example of their forefathers at Badajoz—and with far greater provocation.

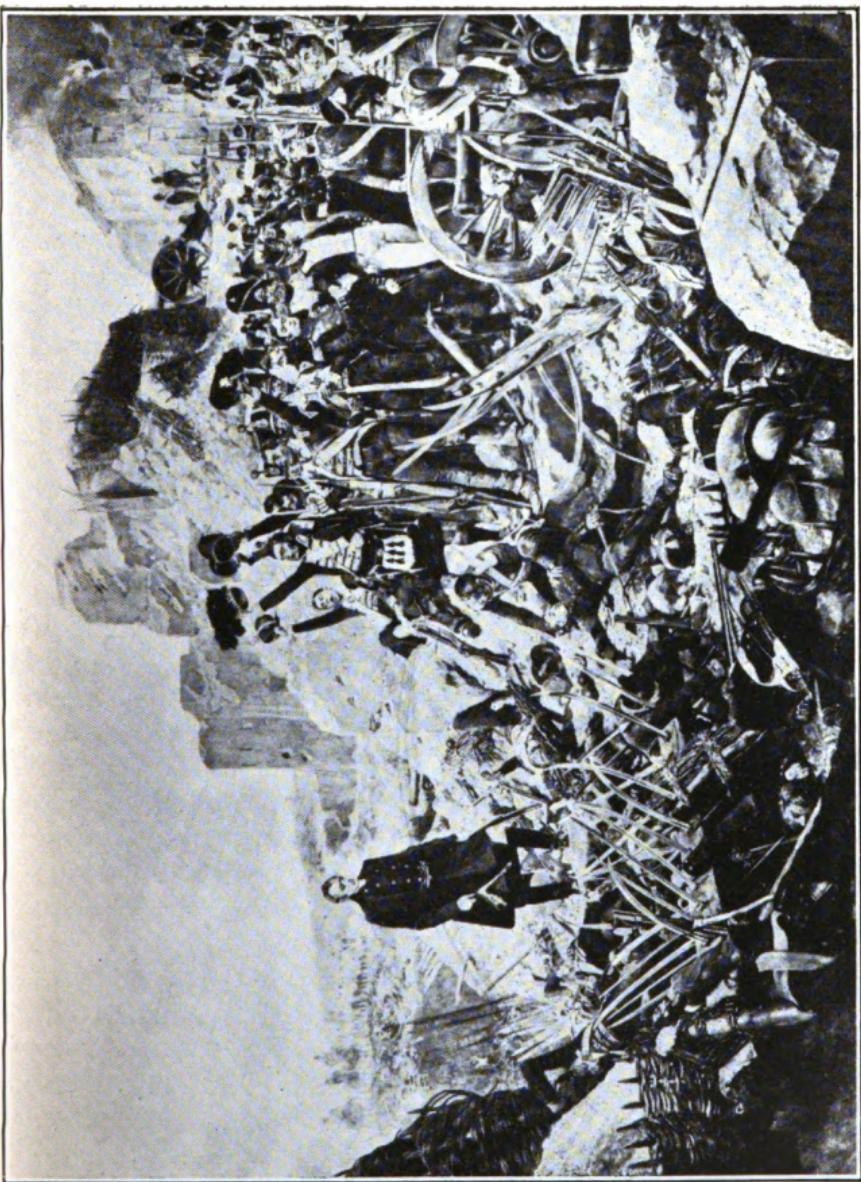
Napier's concluding words on the storming of the breaches are worthy of being set down :—

“ Let it be remembered that this frightful carnage took place in a space of less than a hundred yards square. That the slain died not all suddenly nor by one manner of death. That some perished by steel, some by shot, some by water ; that some were crushed and mangled by heavy weights, some trampled upon, some dashed to atoms by the fiery explosions ; that for hours this destruction was endured without shrinking and that the town was won at last : these things considered, it must be admitted that a British army bears with it an awful power. And false would it be to say that the French were feeble men ; the garrison stood and fought manfully and with good discipline, behaving worthily. Shame there was none on either side. Yet who shall do justice to the bravery of the British soldiers ? The noble emulation of the officers ! Who shall measure out the glory of Ridge, of Macleod, of Nicholas, of O’Hara of the Rifles, who perished on the breach at the head of the stormers, and with him nearly all the volunteers for that desperate service ? Who shall describe the springing valour of that Portuguese grenadier who was killed, the foremost man, at the Santa Maria ? Or the martial fury of that desperate Rifleman, who, in his resolution to win, thrust himself beneath the chained sword-blades, and there suffered the enemy to dash his head to pieces with the ends of their muskets ? Who can sufficiently honour the intrepidity of Walker, of Shaw, of Canch, or the resolution of Fergusson of the 43rd, who having at Rodrigo received two deep wounds was here, with his hurts still open, leading the stormers of his regiment, the third time a volunteer, and the third time wounded ? ”

Pall Mall, London, W.

By permission of Henry Graves & C^o, Ltd.,
THE DAY AFTER BADAJOZ.

Wellington on the Breach assaulted by the Light Division, 6th April 1812.



But, as Napier remarks elsewhere, there were probably done, under cover of the darkness of that night, still braver deeds, which were unrecorded, because those who witnessed them were amongst the slain. Had the Victoria Cross been then instituted, hundreds would have richly deserved it, for even in his fiercest mood the British soldier seems to have gone out of his way to aid his stricken comrades. Ensign Gawler, of the 52nd, who was the junior officer with the storming party, relates how, when wounded, he was befriended by a man of the Regiment. In the advance Gawler was shot in the knee, and rolled over into three or four feet of water which was lying in that part of the ditch. He managed to scramble out, but unable to use his leg, he remained in the ditch until the bugles sounded for the withdrawal of the Light Division. Then, as the troops ascended to the glacis by the ladders, Gawler was noticed by a passing soldier, who "made him take hold of his accoutrements, so that he might drag him up a ladder; 'or,' said he, 'the enemy will come out and bayonet you.' The fine fellow (whose name was never discovered) was just stepping on the covered way, when a thrill was felt by the hand which grasped his belts, and the shot which stretched him lifeless threw his body backward into the ditch again, while the officer whom he had thus rescued crawled out upon the glacis."

The generosity displayed, in times of peril, by these rugged veterans, more especially towards the younger officers who commanded them, is made evident in many an anecdote of the war. The junior officers were mere striplings—Gawler, for instance, wanted three months of his seventeenth year when shot down at Badajoz, and before he had completed his twentieth year he had been twice wounded, and had been present at the battles of Vitoria, the Pyrenees, the Nivelle, the Nive, Orthes, Toulouse, and Waterloo. Nor was his an isolated instance, for many of his brother officers were no older, and the men appear to have vied with one another in the performance of some act of kindness towards their officers. There is the case of the

man Howard, of the 43rd, who after the fall of Badajoz sought out the officer of his company (Lieutenant Pollock) and finding him lying wounded in his tent, brought him an offering of three fine fowls, remarking that they would make good broth.

"This man had been rather a disorderly character, and Pollock had on many occasions administered punishments. He was therefore surprised by the act, and said, 'Howard, you are the last man in the company from whom I should expect such attention.' 'Sir,' replied Howard, 'I have gratitude. You might have had me flogged twenty times; but, Sir, you always punished me yourself, and I have gratitude.'"

Such incidents as these streak the dark pages of history like rays of sunshine streaming through black storm clouds.

THE SALAMANCA CAMPAIGN.

After the capture of Badajoz, Wellington spent no time in inaction. General Graham (afterwards Lord Lynedoch) was placed in command of the fallen fortress, and was given sufficient men to repair its defences and prevent its recapture by the enemy; while the bulk of the army marched north against Marshal Marmont, who, in the meanwhile, had entered Portugal and was threatening Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo. As soon, however, as Wellington's movement was discovered, the French general, afraid of being driven back on to the flooded rivers in his rear, deemed it prudent to retire behind the line of the Agueda river, and thus secure his retreat on Salamanca.

The Light Division struck camp from before Badajoz on the 11th April, and on the 25th reached the ground to the south of Rodrigo with which the regiments were so familiar, going into cantonments about El Bodon and Guinaldo until the 11th June. By that date Wellington had completed his plans, and it was now known that he intended to attack Marmont, before King Joseph should succeed in bringing the southern French army to his aid.

Marching north-east, the Light Division, on the 16th June, approached Salamanca, as it had been ascertained that Marmont proposed to hold first the line of the Tormes river, and then, if forced to retire, the line of the Douro. On the 17th the Tormes was crossed without opposition, and the Light Division took up a position about St. Christoval, while General Clinton made an attack on the Salamanca forts. The forts, however, were stoutly defended and did not surrender until the 27th June, the delay thus caused giving the French marshal ample time to form his plans.

On the 28th the Light Division advanced to Morisco and on the following day took up the pursuit of Marmont's rearguard as far as the banks of the Douro. Three days later Rueda was reached, but then the French, receiving reinforcements, assumed the offensive, so that the Light Division was obliged to transform itself into a rearguard, and cover Wellington's withdrawal to Nava del Rey. From this time marching and counter-marching became daily occupations, the hostile armies being always in close proximity, but never seriously engaged. Wellington and Marmont were endeavouring to out-maneuvre one another, and so skilled in the art of war were the two great opponents, that, for many days, neither was able to gain what he desired. The Allies fell back slowly, and the French followed.

The first two weeks of July thus passed, and on the 16th the Light Division retired to Castrijon, before which place Marmont appeared in strength on the 18th. Throughout the three following days the armies manœuvred within sight of each other, and presented one of the most magnificent spectacles ever witnessed in warfare.

"The Allies, moving in two lines of battle within musket shot of the French, endeavoured to cross their march; the guns on both sides exchanged rough salutations as the accidents of ground favoured their play, and the officers, like gallant gentlemen who bore no malice and knew no fear, made their military recognitions, while the horsemen

on each side watched with eager eyes for an opening to charge. But the French, moving as one man along the crest of the heights, preserved the lead and made no mistake."

On the 21st July both armies crossed to the left bank of the Tormes, and next day Marmont commenced to throw forward his left, in the attempt to cut off his adversary from Portugal. But Wellington, observing that the French marshal had thus unduly extended his force and so weakened his line, immediately seized the opportunity, and ordered the attack which opened the BATTLE OF SALAMANCA.

The afternoon was already passing when Sir Edward Pakenham hurled the 3rd Division at the left of the French line with such vigour as to roll it back in disorder, and at the same time the 4th and 5th Divisions assailed the centre and left centre with similar results. The enemy, imagining that Wellington was retreating on Ciudad Rodrigo, was completely surprised by the suddenness of the attack, and though for a time a stand was made, before long the whole French army broke and fled. The Light Division, together with the 1st Division, had been posted in reserve about the left centre, and suffering but slightly from the occasional shots which fell among the ranks, obtained a magnificent view of the whole fight. Then, towards evening the Light Division was despatched post-haste to the Huerta ford in the hope of being able to bar the passage of the Tormes to the disorganized masses of the enemy. But the movement was of no avail, since the Spaniards, who had been entrusted with the duty of guarding the Alba de Tormes bridge, neglected their work, and allowed the greater part of the French army to effect its escape.

The enemy's loss (killed, wounded, and prisoners) exceeded 12,000, while the Allies lost barely 5,000, of whom some 700 were killed. The casualties in the Light Division were trivial, the 43rd having only two officers (Captain Haverfield and Lieutenant Rideout), two sergeants, and 13 rank and file wounded, and the 52nd still fewer. Marmont was severely wounded, and General

Bonet, his second in command, had also fallen, so the command of the French army devolved upon General Clausel.

On the following morning Wellington took up the pursuit, the Light Division forming the advanced guard, and it was not long before they caught up the enemy's rearguard and handled it very roughly. Hundreds of Frenchmen threw down their arms and fled, and hundreds surrendered, but the main body, its rear well covered by a division of cavalry with guns, succeeded in continuing its retreat unmolested, and by the night of the 24th July, the French had outstripped their pursuers, and had marched forty miles from the field of battle. Wellington, however, was not yet satisfied. He knew that King Joseph's army, marching from the south to effect a junction with Clausel, was within a very short distance, and it was imperative to prevent such a junction; so he pressed forward in Clausel's track. On the 28th July the Light Division reached Olmedo, and on the 1st August Tudela. Meanwhile the British cavalry moving rapidly, entered Valladolid on the 30th July, to find that the French had quitted it hastily, leaving behind them seventeen pieces of artillery, a large quantity of stores, and 800 sick and wounded.

Clausel's army, escaping from Valladolid, fled northwards in the direction of Burgos, and King Joseph beat a retreat to Madrid. Wellington, therefore, having successfully kept the two French armies apart and having dispersed them, had the choice of besieging Clausel in Burgos, or of marching on Madrid. And he chose the latter course.

OCCUPATION OF MADRID.

On the 6th August the army marched south by way of Segovia; and on the 11th the Light Division crossed the Sierra de Guadarama, and bivouacked in the park of the Escorial. The cavalry had a few skirmishes with small bodies of the enemy, but King Joseph, after leaving a garrison of 2,000 men to hold the Retiro—a fortified magazine, withdrew his army from Madrid as soon as the

Allies approached, and Wellington was received in the Spanish capital with acclamations of joy. On the 13th August, the Light Division marched to Las Rozas, and during the next two or three days Madrid was *en fête*, being decorated in honour of the Allies, who received a most hearty welcome from the inhabitants. At night the principal streets were illuminated, while balls and various other entertainments were given. On the 14th, the French garrison of the Retiro surrendered, and the Light Division then proceeded to Villa Verde, where a halt was made until the 29th. On that day cantonments were taken up at Getaf , and for nearly two months the Division enjoyed a well-earned rest as well as a good deal of amusement in Madrid.

Wellington himself remained in the Capital only a fortnight, and on the 1st September returned to the north, in order to continue the operations from which he had withdrawn a month before. Sir Rowland Hill, with his own Corps and the Light Division, was left in Madrid, with instructions to watch Soult and Joseph Bonaparte, whilst Wellington and Clinton attacked Clausel, who was soon driven back from the Douro, upon Burgos. That fortress, which had the reputation of being impregnable, was at once besieged, and during the next few weeks was five times assaulted, though never carried. Circumstances prevented a further attempt being made, as Wellington learned that Soult and Joseph Bonaparte had succeeded in uniting their armies, and were on the point of moving in great strength against Hill, and at the same time proposed to cut off himself and his army from Portugal. On the 21st October, therefore, the British commander raised the siege of Burgos, and put his army in retreat towards the Douro. That same day the Light Division, still in cantonments close to Madrid, was despatched towards the east and north-east of the city, in order to delay the approach of the French, until General Hill and his Corps should return from the Jarama river, whither a reconnaissance had been pushed some time before.

RETREAT FROM MADRID.

The combination which Hill now knew to be coming against him was far too strong to be withstood, for Joseph Bonaparte, united to Soult and Jourdan, was advancing on the Capital with no fewer than 50,000 infantry, 8,000 cavalry, and 84 pieces of artillery. Moreover, Hill was aware that Wellington was in some danger of being cut off from his base. These circumstances left but one course open to him, and he accordingly ordered the immediate evacuation of Madrid.

On the 30th October the Light Division came into Madrid, where Hill's Corps had already concentrated; the Retiro, with all its stores and munitions of war, was blown up; and on the following day the British force commenced the return march across the Guadarama mountains. There were, besides the cavalry and the Light Division, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Divisions—collected from the valley of the Tagus and from Cadiz; and the Light Division and the cavalry, forming the rearguard, were the last troops to leave Madrid.

The march was then continued without molestation to Alba de Tormes, which was reached on the 7th November, when a junction was formed with Wellington's army. On the 10th, the Light Division was transferred from Sir Rowland Hill's command to the main force under Wellington, and prepared to take part in the battle which the latter hoped to force the enemy to fight on the Tormes. And the French were as eager for battle as were the British. King Joseph, Soult, and Jourdan, with their armies united, were all up and ready, and though at first the French marshals could not agree on a plan, they eventually crossed the Tormes, and commenced a movement which seriously endangered Wellington's line of retreat on Rodrigo. Wellington, however, recognizing the danger in time, and aided by a thick fog and heavy rain, contrived to extricate his army, and on the 16th November the allies retired by three roads towards Rodrigo. At first the pursuit was slow, but it soon quickened, and the enemy's cavalry to the number

of 8,000 began to harass the rearguard, capturing some of the baggage and taking General Paget prisoner. At San Munoz, on the 17th, the situation assumed a serious aspect, as the enemy's guns, posted on a high hill, obtained the range of the retiring troops, and played upon them as they crossed the open plain towards the ford of the river Huebra. The French cavalry and infantry also came on rapidly, and four companies of the 43rd, with a company of the Rifles, left in a wood to cover the passage of the river, were within an ace of being cut off, when fortunately the guns of the Division came into action and checked the pursuit. A heavy rain beating in the faces of the pursuers also delayed them, and for the remainder of the day the 43rd and 52nd held the several fords of the river, and denied them to the enemy.

Without further molestation, the Light Division reached Ciudad Rodrigo on the 19th November, after a retreat, which, though shorter, was, in the opinion of many, more hazardous than that to Corunna. At the Huebra, the 43rd lost LIEUTENANT RIDEOUT and one sergeant killed, Lieutenant Baillie and 11 men wounded, and 25 prisoners; the 52nd, CAPTAIN DAWSON and two men killed, Captains Currie and Fuller, Lieutenant Winterbottom, and 30 men wounded, as well as 21 prisoners.

On the 23rd November, the Division moved to San Felices el Chico, bivouacking there until the 25th, when it returned to Rodrigo, and at the end of the month went into winter quarters in the villages to the south of the fortress.

The Regiments of the Light Division had had a long year of heavy work. They had stormed and carried CIUDAD RODRIGO; marched 200 miles to the south; stormed and carried BADAJOZ; marched back to Rodrigo; advanced 50 miles to SALAMANCA, had sundry skirmishes, and were present at the great battle of the 22nd July; marched onwards 60 miles to Valladolid; turned and marched south 100 miles to MADRID; occupied the capital; retreated north to Salamanca, and thence, with

some skirmishing, to Rodrigo. Thus they returned to their old quarters, having within eleven months assisted in the capture of the two strongest fortresses in the Peninsula, fought in one decisive battle and in many minor actions, and marched certainly no fewer than one thousand miles in every description of climate and weather, constantly short of provisions, and enduring countless privations. How many of the officers and men who advanced on Ciudad Rodrigo in January were fit for duty at the end of the year it is impossible to say, for we know nothing of the numbers carried off by disease or invalided. We do know, however, that of the 43rd and 52nd there fell fighting—some killed, some wounded—upwards of 55 officers and 900 N.C.O.s and men. But the strength of the Regiments was well maintained by the continuous despatch of reinforcements from England.

CHAPTER X.

CAMPAIGN OF 1813 IN THE PENINSULA.

(See Map II.)

The 43rd and 52nd, as well as the other regiments of the Light Division, settled down for nearly six months in comparatively comfortable cantonments near Ciudad Rodrigo, and amongst the amusements provided for the men were theatrical performances given in the so-called Light Division Theatre, the parts, both male and female, being played by officers. But by April preparations began for the coming campaign ; drafts were received from England ; and drill manoeuvres were practised in earnest.

Napoleon had suffered severely in Russia, and requiring reinforcements of old soldiers and experienced officers, he drew off Soult and 20,000 men from Spain, and instructed his brother, King Joseph, to concentrate all his forces in the north of the Peninsula. But Joseph Bonaparte was not the man to deal with the situation ; he was not popular with his generals ; and he was not able to control them. Instead, therefore, of concentration having been arrived at by the spring of 1813, there was only a half-hearted general movement towards the proposed point of concentration. The king himself was at Valladolid ; Drouet was on the march from Segovia to Valladolid ; Gazan was moving between the Upper Tormes and the Douro ; and Reille was on the Douro and the Esla. The point of concentration was Valladolid ; the French right wing was covered by the Esla river, the centre by the Douro, and the left by the Tormes. Had all the French forces in the Peninsula been collected on these three rivers, and had King Joseph been

an abler general, Wellington could have effected little against such dispositions and such numerical superiority. But Leval, Clause, and Foy were all isolated—the first at Madrid, preparing to carry off booty from the capital ; the second engaged with insurgents in Navarre ; and the last in Biscay. And all these circumstances were well known to Wellington when he devised the great plan which he forthwith put into execution. His real intentions he kept secret, and by spreading false and confusing reports he thoroughly deceived his opponents, who were unable to forecast his movements. The plan, which resulted in the complete overthrow of the French and the expulsion, within five months, of every French soldier from Portugal and Northern Spain, is outlined by the historian, Napier, in these words :—

“ Such was the state of affairs when Wellington, forming two masses, gave one of 40,000 fighting men to General Graham, with orders to penetrate through the Portuguese province of Tras os Montes to the Esla river, in Spain, thus turning that line of the Douro which Marmont had the year before made an iron barrier. With the other mass, 30,000, he designed to force the Tormes, pass the Douro, unite with Graham, augment his army to 90,000, by calling down the Galicians under Castanos, and then, ranging the whole on a new front, march all abreast upon the scattered French and drive them refluent to the Pyrenees. A grand design and grandly executed. For strong of heart and strong of hand his veterans marched to the encounter, the glories of twelve victories playing about their bayonets, and he their leader so proudly confident that in crossing the stream which marks the frontier of Spain, he rose in his stirrups, and waving his hand cried out *Adieu Portugal!* ”

On the 16th May the Light Division was reviewed by the Earl of Wellington on the plain of Espeja, and four days later broke up cantonments and assembled at Carpio. On the 21st the Division crossed the Agueda, when, forming part of the right wing of the army, it marched past Sala-

manca, fording the Tormes on the 28th May, and crossing the Douro on the 2nd June. Graham was already well forward on the left, and had reached the Esla river—not easily, but by the most strenuous efforts on the part of his troops. So far, therefore, Wellington's plan had been magnificently carried out, and the French, though still ignorant of the impending storm, began to be alarmed. In vain did King Joseph send despatches to his generals to concentrate on the plains of Burgos, for it was already too late to assemble for battle in such a forward position, so he carried away his stores from Burgos, and decided to make a stand outside Vitoria, which now contained a vast accumulation of war material and other stores, besides a convoy of treasure recently arrived from France for the payment of the troops.

The Light Division soon gained touch with the French rearguard ; and, passing Horrillas on the 12th June, and the Ebro, at Puente Arenas, on the 16th, it suddenly came upon two brigades of Maucune's Division on the 18th. A sharp affair followed, with the result that 300 prisoners and a great quantity of baggage were taken, and the enemy put to flight into the mountains. On the 19th June, the Light Division reached Subijana de Morillas.

Vitoria stands compactly built on an eminence, rising up at the end of a plain, or rather basin, some ten miles long by eight miles broad. To the north of the town, the river Zadora flows east and west for some miles, until on approaching the Morillas range, it makes a sudden bend, almost at right angles, to the south. Thence, through the Pass of Pueblas, it finds its way to the Ebro. Parallel to the main course of the Zadora and at a distance of some three miles to the north, runs a range of hills ; on the opposite bank, and five miles to its south, is another parallel range ; while the western edge of the basin consists of the Morillas mountains, pierced at one point, viz., the Pueblas defile.

It was behind the latter range that Wellington, on the 20th June, assembled his army. The French, defending

Vitoria, were holding the line of the Zadora, with the intention of barring its passage at all points. Seven bridges spanned the river, which, though narrow, was deep and in most parts flowing between precipitous banks. Reille's corps, on the right of the line, was posted to the north of the town, with orders to hold the two bridges at Gamara Mayor and Ariaga; Maransin's Brigade, on the extreme left, occupied the southern range of hills, with the object of guarding that flank, and preventing the passage of the Pueblas defile; while the centre of the enemy's line of battle extended along the Hermandad ridge. Midway between this ridge and the Morillas mountains flowed the Zadora, with four bridges at no great distance apart. Wellington's plan was soon formed. Graham, with 20,000 men, was instructed to march to the flank and attack Reille; Hill, with another 20,000, was to force the Pueblas defile, push back Maransin and seize the bridge of Nanclares. To the remainder of the army, under the great commander himself, was allotted the task of pouring over the Morillas mountains on to the four bridges which lay below, and of assaulting the enemy's centre.

BATTLE OF VITORIA.

(21st June, 1813).

Dawn of the 21st was ushered in by showers of rain and steamy heat. Hill moved forward to attack Maransin, and met with considerable opposition, but he succeeded in gaining the heights, in passing his Division through the Pueblas defile, and in seizing the village of Subijana de Alava. Meanwhile, Graham had moved wide away to the left, and the troops of Wellington's main attack had crossed the Morillas mountains and were nearing the bridges of the Zadora. All this had taken time, and it was almost midday when the Light Division formed up under cover of some trees, within two hundred yards of the bridge of Villodas. Across the river, the enemy's guns were posted so as to sweep the bridges, but so close were they to the British

Riflemen that the gunners were forced to keep behind cover in rear, and for the moment were unable to serve their pieces.

The various Divisions lay within easy distance of the several bridges by which they were to cross the river, and before long the enemy's fire grew hot. At length, Kempt's Brigade (with which was the 43rd) rushed the bridge of Tres Puentes and established themselves on the enemy's side. Some sharp skirmishing took place, but the French made little effort to defend the other bridges, and Wellington's men were soon pressing the attack on the enemy's centre, posted along the Hermandad ridge, near Margarita. The battle now raged furiously ; the French stood their ground, and, bringing fifty guns into action, engaged the British artillery, while the infantry kept up a continuous fire of musketry. The smoke from the guns hung in the air, and, mingling with the dust raised by the rush of the assailants, formed a dense screen, which effectually concealed the movements of both combatants. It was, however, impossible to resist the onslaught of the Allies ; Hill had worked his way forward on the right ; and the far distant sounds of Graham's attack on the left could now be distinctly heard. At this juncture, King Joseph became aware that his flanks were in imminent danger, and that his centre, still six miles in front of Vitoria, ran the risk of being cut off and annihilated. So, under cover of the smoke and confusion, the Frenchmen commenced to draw off towards the town, closely pursued by the Allies.

The six miles of country over which this running fight took place was undulating, rough, and broken ; and the enemy, knowing each ridge, hillock, and fold in the ground, made every use of such knowledge, so that resistance was constant. Successive positions were taken up, and defended with gun and musket, until their defence seemed hopeless ; and each position abandoned told its tale of destruction, of dead and wounded Frenchmen, and of captured guns. Hour after hour, the battle raged, and, at about six o'clock in the evening, the enemy made his last stand on a low

ridge, barely a mile from Vitoria, refusing to acknowledge even now that he was beaten. Here stood eighty guns, pouring grape and round shot on the assailants, while amongst the guns and on their flanks the infantry used their muskets with deadly effect. The Allies were unable to face the storm, and the French general, noticing the recoil of the 3rd Division, and under the impression that he was fighting a rearguard action, commenced to withdraw the troops on his left flank. But the 4th Division, observing the movement, rushed headlong on the retreating body, and carried the position.

Up till this moment, even King Joseph, watching events from the town, did not realise that the day was lost. He saw that Reille still held his ground, that the right flank was secure, and that his opponents could not break his centre. Yet, there were few of the inhabitants of Vitoria so sanguine as the King, and the roads running east from the town were already blocked with carriages, carts, and fugitives on foot. Then, when the centre gave way, panic prevailed ; the King ordered the guns to take the road to Salvatierra ; the allied cavalry swept through and round Vitoria ; and the infantry followed with all speed.

Vitoria, not fortified in any way, was evacuated ; but Reille still maintained his position, which he now found to be most dangerous. Desperate fighting had been going on all day in this part of the field ; Graham's men stormed the two bridges and carried them, but only to be driven from them again, and kept at bay by Reille's guns and infantry soldiers. A deadlock ensued ; neither side could make headway ; then Reille suddenly realised that Wellington's troops were pouring between his rear and the town, and that the victorious cavalry were threatening to destroy him. In the nick of time he saw the danger, skilfully disposed his troops, and with great gallantry fought his way to Metauce on the Salvatierra road, when he attempted to form a rearguard to the fugitive French army. Darkness alone saved him ; for, the Allies, heated with victory, pursued until they could no longer distinguish friend from foe.

Thus was fought, from dawn to dark, in the heat of a Spanish summer, the BATTLE OF VITORIA—a fight in which Wellington's veterans proved once more their sterling worth. On each side almost six thousand men fell, but the rout of the enemy was complete, and the French army in the Peninsula had never experienced a more crushing defeat. All their guns, save two, their depôts of stores and ammunition, their treasure chests, their wagons, and in fact everything they possessed fell into the hands of the victors, and the army that fled was a disorganised rabble, having nothing but the clothes on their backs and the muskets in their hands.

Considering the length of the fight and the result, the casualties in the 43rd and 52nd were remarkably few—only amounting to some half-dozen men killed and forty wounded. CAPTAIN CURRIE of the 52nd was shot through the head while charging in front of the skirmishers of his company, and Lieut. Northey was wounded; while Major Duffy and Lieutenant Houlton of the 43rd were also wounded.

It was not Wellington's intention to give the enemy any respite, and at midday of the 22nd the Light Division pushed forward in pursuit, halting for the night about a league from Salvatierra. Next day the French rearguard, hastily organized by Reille, was caught up near Iturmundi, and put to the rout, the Chestnut Troop doing great execution, and forcing the enemy to abandon one of his two remaining guns. On the 24th, the Division bivouacked within two leagues of Pamplona (or Pampeluna), under the cover of the guns of which place the enemy had halted, and here the fighting ceased, for Pamplona was strongly fortified, and Wellington did not propose to waste his strength in assaulting it. It was sufficient for his purpose to blockade the town, so as to prevent the garrison from joining the other French forces in the field. Moreover, there was plenty of work to be done, for not only had Pamplona to be watched, but the great fortress of San Sebastian had also to be simultaneously besieged.

At this time it was thought that Clause's Division was in

the neighbourhood of Sanguessa—some twenty-five miles to the south-east of Pamplona, and on the 25th Wellington despatched the Light Division to the south, with orders to intercept Clausel. Accordingly, the Division, marching at first to the south and then to the east, reached Sanguessa on the 30th, but without discovering any sign of the enemy. Two days later, the march was resumed to the north, and on the 15th July the Light Division entered the valley of the Bidassoa, having covered more than one hundred and fifty miles since the fight at Vitoria and not less than four hundred miles since the opening of the campaign—scarcely eight weeks before.

The upper waters of the Bidassoa flow through mountains as wild and intricate as probably any in Europe, and the road by which the Light Division advanced runs along the right bank of the river. Everywhere it is commanded by the neighbouring heights, so that the column, as it moved forward towards the village of Vera, was practically marching through a defile, and found it necessary to keep strong flanking parties skirmishing from ridge to ridge by the side of the road. French sentries were perched on every crag, and the enemy was posted in strength on the slopes of the Pyrenees, which could be seen towering to the north of Vera. Making good the ground as they advanced, the companies of the Light Division regiments gradually approached the village, but met with a certain amount of resistance as they did so. Unexpected volleys were occasionally poured into them, and during the advance on the 15th July the 43rd had 14 men wounded. In one of these fusillades Lieutenant Tylden-Pattenson (43rd) had a narrow escape. He had in his breast pocket a copy of a volume of *Gil Blas*, and as he was marching by the side of the column a bullet buried itself in the book, striking with such force as to knock the lieutenant off his feet, though without otherwise injuring him.

That evening the Division secured the heights of Santa Barbara, within a mile of Vera, and bivouacked on the slopes, with pickets thrown out towards the village. There

the troops remained in observation until the 20th July, when the 7th Division having been temporarily withdrawn from the heights of Echallar and the right flank of the Light Division being thus exposed, a retirement was made from Santa Barbara, and a fresh position taken up on the opposite side of the river. The Bidassoa was crossed by the Lesaca bridge, about a mile to the south of Santa Barbara, and the Light Division, now protected by the deep and rapid river, was able to watch from the heights about Lesaca, the enemy's bivouacs in the vicinity of Vera. The situation in this upper portion of the Bidassoa valley remained unaltered for some few days, the Light Division being employed, with a Spanish force, in guarding the passes between the Upper Bidassoa and San Sebastian. Elsewhere much was happening.

It will be remembered that when the Light Division marched round by Sanguessa to the neighbourhood of Vera, Wellington left sufficient men to blockade Pamplona, and went on with the bulk of his army to join Graham in besieging San Sebastian, the garrison of which place had been reinforced by a portion of Foy's corps. By the 28th June, the greater part of the French army defeated at Vitoria had reached the Pyrenees, and King Joseph himself had crossed the frontier into France. The news of these misfortunes reached Napoleon at Dresden, and on the 1st July he gave Marshal Soult the command of the French forces in Spain, ordering him to supersede King Joseph and reorganize the army. Within a very few days, the great marshal reached the Pyrenees and drew up his plans for the relief of Pamplona and San Sebastian.

The latter fortress, now being besieged by the Allies, was situated on the sea coast some fifteen miles as the crow flies to the west of Vera, but the intervening country—a mass of intricate mountains—had few roads. Still, it was necessary to secure all this country, in order to guard against the possibility of Soult falling on the besiegers from the east, and thus Wellington's line, by the middle of July, extended eastward from San Sebastian for a distance of

upwards of thirty-five miles, with outposts pushed to the left bank of the Lower Bidassoa, to the Upper Bidassoa about Vera and Lesaca, and thence through Echallar to Roncesvalles, where Soult was massing for his proposed operations.

During July the siege of San Sebastian was maintained, but the fortress defied all attempts at capture, and towards the end of the month the siege was converted into a simple blockade, because Soult's activity necessitated the employment of most of the besieging troops elsewhere. The French marshal had collected nearly 40,000 men at St. Jean Pied de Port (near Roncesvalles) with the object of marching south to the relief of Pamplona, and another 20,000 he handed over to D'Erlon, for the purpose of clearing the passes near Maya. His confidence was considerable, for, in his general order to his troops he expressed a hope of celebrating the Emperor's birthday at Vitoria. On the 25th July, Soult advanced to the attack, and throughout the following week severe fighting took place all along the line. The resistance met with, however, was greater than he had anticipated, for the British divisions, although outnumbered, held tenaciously to their positions, and only withdrew in order to concentrate for further resistance. Eventually, with a loss of 15,000 men, Soult found himself forced to abandon his attempt to reach Pamplona, and on the 2nd August he retired behind the line of the Bidassoa.

When it was thought that Soult might succeed in forcing his way to Pamplona, the Light Division was despatched with all haste from Lesaca towards that place, but as soon as Soult's failure became known, the Division retraced its steps, and, by arduous forced marches, reached Sumbella on the 1st August, and Santa Barbara, near Vera, on the 2nd. The retreating French were still close at hand, and were driven from the neighbouring heights with no little difficulty. During the skirmishing, Wellington, who was in this part of the field, narrowly escaped falling into the enemy's hands, and, according to Napier, he owed his

escape to the presence of mind of a 43rd sergeant, THOMAS BLOOD.

"He had taken towards Echallar," says Napier, "half a company of the 43rd as an escort, and placed a sergeant, named Blood, with a party to watch in front while he examined his maps. A French detachment endeavoured to cut the party off, and their troops, rushing on at speed, would infallibly have fallen unawares upon Wellington, if Blood, leaping down the precipitous rocks, had not given him warning; as it was, they arrived in time to send a volley after him while galloping away."

Thomas Blood, a stormer at San Sebastian, was severely wounded, and was one of the first Colour-Sergeants appointed in the 43rd. For his gallantry on many occasions he received a combatant commission in the 6th Regiment, 10th November, 1813, and was promoted Lieutenant on the 8th September, 1814.

Having pushed back the enemy, the Light Division posted piquets in the village of Vera, where the three Regiments remained unmolested until the end of the month, since Wellington was unwilling to take advantage of his successes until he had reduced San Sebastian, and since Soult, somewhat crippled by his heavy losses, was content to maintain his line of defence along the right bank of the Bidassoa from its mouth upstream to Vera, and thence across the ridges of the Pyrenees to St. Jean Pied de Port.

STORMING OF SAN SEBASTIAN.

(31st August, 1813.)

When Wellington began the campaign of 1813 he was based on Portugal, and his stores and reinforcements came from England by way of Lisbon. As he marched north his line of communications increased in length each day, but the events which immediately followed the battle of Vitoria enabled him to change his base to the north coast of Spain, which gave his army the immense advantage of being close to a seaboard base within easy distance of

England. Under such circumstances the British commander had every reason to expect that he would want for nothing, but he was disappointed, for he had failed to take into account the extraordinary supineness of the British government. Although stores could be landed in safety almost within view of the force investing San Sebastian, such things as Wellington required were not sent, and the siege of the fortress had to be postponed at the end of July, because guns and ammunition were not forthcoming. "Since Great Britain," wrote Wellington, "has been a naval power, a British army has never before been left in such a situation at a most important moment." And the neglect in forwarding supplies was not the only drawback with which Wellington had to contend: the Admiralty refused naval co-operation, and consequently the enemy was able to use the sea and to throw into San Sebastian not only reinforcements, but also guns and stores of every description. It was not until the 19th August that Wellington began to receive the heavy guns and other siege necessaries which he had asked for three months before. But, as soon as they arrived, he re-commenced the siege operations with vigour.

The Light Division did not form part of the actual besieging force, being in position, as has been said, some miles to the east, on the Upper Bidassoa, and it is not necessary here to enter into the details of the siege, except to say that for ten days the great guns battered the walls, that, during that time, the besiegers suffered severely from the fire of the enemy's guns, that the men in the trenches had constantly to repel with the bayonet the sallies of the garrison, and that the capture of the place seemed still far off. On the 30th August, however, Wellington ordered the assault to take place at a little before noon next day; but some of his generals, feeling that the fortress was still too strong to be carried, demurred at the order; whereupon Wellington, under the impression that the besiegers had become disheartened, called for volunteers from each of the fifteen regiments of the 1st, 4th, and Light Divisions—

"men who could show other troops how to mount a breach." It was in this way that the 43rd and 52nd furnished storming parties for San Sebastian, and it was by the use of the words just quoted that Wellington so enraged the besiegers—and more particularly the 5th Division—that they swore that if the new-comers entered the place first, they would drive them out at the point of the bayonet.

No sooner was the call for volunteers made known to the 43rd and 52nd than almost every officer and man came forward, and the difficulty of selecting the few men required became great, for from the two regiments together only one captain, two subalterns, six sergeants, and seventy men were to be taken. The selection of men was left to the captains of companies, who had to weigh carefully the claims of each man and his physique—in many instances eventually having to make the would-be stormers draw lots for the last places. Among the officers the competition was even keener, and those who were chosen were regarded with envy by their less fortunate comrades. CAPTAIN ROBERT CAMPBELL and LIEUTENANT A. HARVEST were the lucky officers of the 52nd, and LIEUTENANT O'CONNELL the subaltern of the 43rd; while the command of the whole storming party of the Light Division (consisting of 100 men) was at first given to MAJOR WILLIAM NAPIER of the 43rd but subsequently to LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HUNT, of the 52nd, who claimed it by right of seniority. Never did a more gallant body of men stand under arms than these chosen few who paraded in the square of Lesaca to march to San Sebastian, knowing full well that the duty for which they had volunteered would be of the most dangerous, and that their reward would be honour and glory, for there were no medals and crosses in those days.

Early on the morning of the 31st August the Light Division party reached the trenches in front of the fortress, and soon after eleven o'clock the assault commenced. As Wellington himself was engaged in conducting operations towards the Bidassoa, General Leith, of the 5th Division, was in command of the assaulting troops, and he, naturally

indignant at the insult heaped upon his own Division by the call for volunteers, refused to allow the latter to lead the assault. Accordingly the Light Division stormers were disgusted to find themselves posted in the trenches, with orders to keep down the enemy's fire while the original besiegers delivered the assault. Then began the storming of the great breach, but so terrific was the fire of the defenders that the assailants' ranks were mown down time after time. Yet, perhaps smarting under the lash of Wellington's words, they refused to give way before the eyes of the men who had been sent to supplant them, and they fell in hundreds. At length there remained but half a battalion in reserve, who, with the volunteers, stood in the trenches waiting for the order to advance. But General Graham, watching events from the Chofres Hills to the east, and fearing that the assault would fail, ordered the batteries on those hills to fire across the Urumea river over the heads of the assailants.

For half an hour the guns rained shot and shell on the ramparts above the great breach, and as soon as the effect began to be apparent, the Light Division and other stormers advanced from the trenches. Desperate fighting ensued, but before long the Light Division men gained possession of some buildings on the right of the great breach. Still the place was not won, and it is doubtful if the breach would have been carried that day had not an accident overwhelmed the unfortunate Frenchmen. They had collected together a vast heap of powder barrels and other combustibles for use against the assailants, and these, taking fire, blew up with an immense explosion, by which great numbers of the garrison were killed. The survivors, disheartened by the accident, gave way before the stormers, who soon forced their way over the ramparts, and by 3 p.m. were in the town, the garrison taking refuge in the Castle, which held out for some few days.

Almost at the same time as the greater breach was carried, the lesser breach, a little to the north of the other was successfully assaulted by 300 Portuguese under MAJOR

KENNETH SNODGRASS, a 52nd officer at the time in command of a Portuguese regiment. The Portuguese were posted near the breaching batteries on the Chofres Hills, and Major Snodgrass, whose daring was well known in the army, had during the previous night gone off alone to reconnoitre the lesser breach. The mouth of the Urumea river, which separated the Chofres from the spit of land upon which stood the fortress, lay between him and his goal ; but suspecting that the river was not deep, he entered it under cover of darkness, and found that the water only reached to his waist. He then went on, and eluding the vigilance of the French sentries, he climbed up the breach, and looked down, at midnight into the town. And this gallant exploit was the means of enabling the assault to be delivered, next day, on the lesser breach. Snodgrass obtained permission to make the attempt, called for 300 volunteers, and with them forded the river and entered the breach, in time to assist in completing the capture of the place.

The stormers of the 43rd and 52nd, who fought through the greater breach, suffered heavy losses. Of the four officers Lieutenant O'Connell (43rd) and Lieutenant Harvest (52nd), commanding the Forlorn Hope, were killed, and Lieutenant-Colonel Hunt and Captain R. Campbell were wounded. Of the six sergeants four were wounded ; while of the 70 men seven were killed, 34 were wounded, and many others were injured by falls or by being trampled under foot. It is, perhaps remarkable that Lieutenant Harvest's twin brother, in the 43rd, had been killed in the previous year, when in command of the Forlorn Hope, at the storming of Badajoz.

"Three generals," writes Napier, summing up the result of the five hours' fighting, "Leith, Oswald, and Robinson, had been hurt in the trenches ; Sir Richard Fletcher, a brave man, was killed ; Colonel Burgovne, next in command of the Engineers, was wounded. The carnage at the breach was appalling. Nearly half the volunteers were struck down ; the 5th Division suffered in the same pro-

portion, and the whole loss since the renewal of the siege exceeded 2,500 men and officers. Amongst the last may be mentioned Lieutenant John O'Connell of the 43rd, in blood nearly related to the celebrated turbulent agitator. He was gentle, amiable and modest, and brave as man could be, and having previously been in several storming parties here again sought in such dangerous service the promotion he had earned before without receiving—he found death."

The names of the 52nd Stormers were entered for all time in the Record of the Regiment,* and to each surviving non-commissioned officer and man was given by their Colonel, a distinctive badge—an embroidered laurel wreath with the letters V.S. (*i.e.* Valiant Stormer), to wear on the right arm for the remainder of his service. The men of the 43rd were not equally honoured, but when, just afterwards, the Commander-in-Chief instituted the honourable distinction of Colour-Sergeant, as a reward for valour, five of the ten first colour-sergeants selected for the 43rd had been in the storming party at San Sebastian, while the others had been stormers at Badajoz or Ciudad Rodrigo.

During this day Soult made a demonstration from the passes of the Pyrenees against that portion of the covering force which was posted about San Marcial and the Pena de Haya, consisting chiefly of Spaniards. Reille, with 18,000 men, forded the Lower Bidassoa near Irun, and attacked San Marcial; while Clansel, with 20,000 forded the river a little below Vera, and pushed forward towards the Pena de Haya. The Spaniards fought stubbornly and received the highest praise from Wellington, who was himself present; and the Portuguese, opposed to Clause's attack, made a strenuous resistance, but were forced back slowly up the

* The French honoured their gallant dead to an even greater extent. It is related of a French soldier, La Tour d'Auvergne, that after serving as an officer up to the age of fifty, he retired and enlisted as a private in the 46th Regiment, to be killed at Oberhausen. For years afterwards his name was called at the regimental parade each morning, and one of the men always answered, "*Died on the Field of Honour.*"

mountain. The Light Division, guarding the right flank, still remained at Santa Barbara within view of the fight, but later in the day Wellington ordered four companies of the 43rd, three companies of the Rifles, and some Spanish troops to cross the river, by way of the Lesaca bridge, and reinforce the Portuguese. Clausel now feared for the safety of his left flank, and soon afterwards a violent tempest of wind and rain smote the unfortunate Frenchmen, and made further progress impossible.

Reille had fared equally badly at San Marcial, but when night came on, he contrived to draw off his troops and recross the river in safety. Clausel, however, was less fortunate, for although he himself, with two brigades, succeeded in fording the Bidassoa near Vera, his lieutenant, General Vandermaesen, with the remainder of the force was cut off by the rising waters. Just above Vera was a bridge, which, Vandermaesen knew, provided the sole means of escape from the perilous situation in which his force was placed. But the Light Division at Santa Barbara, uncertain as to whether, in the darkness, Clausel had been able to extricate his troops, and aware of the facility for escape which would be afforded by the bridge, took the precaution to guard it. Early in the night, therefore, the roadway of the bridge was blocked with barrels filled with stones, and two companies of the 95th Rifles were posted in a fortified house at the head of the bridge. Yet, during the dark and stormy night, the Frenchmen rushed the sentries and commenced to pour across the bridge before their presence became known to the Riflemen in the house. The passage was forced, and it was impossible to prevent the escape of the enemy, although Captain Cadoux and his gallant Riflemen fought with extraordinary bravery, and sold their lives dearly. The firing brought some companies of the 52nd to the spot, and the remainder of the Division soon turned out, but the French, covered by the guns on the heights above, were already making good their retreat towards Vera, and did not stop to reply to the heavy fire which was poured into them. An inspection of the bridge at daylight

showed how deadly had been the fire of the Riflemen, for the bodies of more than three hundred Frenchmen were found in the neighbourhood.

Thus ended Soult's last attempt to relieve San Sebastian and Pamplona. The surviving defenders of the former who, after the fall of the fortress, had retired into the Castle on the 31st August, surrendered on the 9th September; and Pamplona eventually capitulated early in November. In the meanwhile the French marshal kept his army busily employed in strengthening his line of defence along the Pyrenees, and during September redoubts were constructed on all prominent points overlooking the Bidassoa valley, so that, as time went on, there grew up in front of the Light Division a most formidable line of works barring the way to France.

CHAPTER XI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1813 IN THE PYRENEES AND SOUTH OF FRANCE.

WELLINGTON, having driven the French out of northern Spain into the Pyrenees, at first had no intention of following them into France, his reasons being that Napoleon might at any moment reinforce Soult, and that a French army (under Suchet) was still in possession of the Mediterranean province of Catalonia, in eastern Spain. With Suchet in his rear, his position was insecure ; and if large reinforcements were despatched to Soult, the safety of the Allied army might be threatened ; although the proximity of the sea-base rendered disaster impossible. After the fall of San Sebastian, therefore, Wellington inclined to transfer the war to Catalonia, but political pressure from home and the news of Napolean's disasters in Germany combined to cause him to change his plans, when, as Napier says, he "matured an offensive movement as daring as any undertaken during the whole war"—in short, an assault on Soult's whole line of fortifications in the Pyrenees, and the invasion of France.

Between the opposing armies the Bidassoa flowed from Vera to the sea ; but to the north and north-east of Vera there was no such well-marked dividing line—only the labyrinth of rocky spurs and ravines which seamed the mountain slopes. Wellington's plan was to advance simultaneously on the right and on the left, the troops on the right storming the Great La Rhune, while those on the left forced the passage of the Lower Bidassoa. These operations were to have commenced in the middle of September, but,

owing to faulty arrangements in the matter of pontoons, and subsequently to bad weather, they were deferred until the 7th October.

THE HEIGHTS OF VERA.

(7th October, 1813).

From the bivouac of the Light Division at Santa Barbara the enemy's entrenched positions were clearly visible, standing out on the bold spurs of the mountains, not a mile beyond the village of Vera. Orders for the coming attack were issued on the evening of the 6th, and the direction which each company was to take was clearly explained to the officers, and communicated to the men. That the task would be no light one was fully realised, and the troops were ordered to leave their knapsacks in the bivouac—an arrangement usually adopted only in the case of such heavy work as storming a fortress.

Early on the morning of the 7th, the Light Division advanced to Vera, the 4th Division moving up to Santa Barbara to form a reserve. The 1st Brigade, commanded by Major-General Kempt, consisted of the 43rd, the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 95th Rifles, and the 17th Portuguese; and the 2nd Brigade, under Colonel Colborne (52nd), consisted of the 52nd, 2nd Battalion 95th Rifles, and the 1st and 3rd Caçadores. As far as Vera the two brigades marched abreast, the 1st on the right of the 2nd, with some Spanish troops filling the gap between.

The main French position extended along a well-marked ridge, from La Bayonette to Commissari and thence towards the Greater La Rhune, frowning down upon Vera from a vast height. Between this commanding ridge and the village, the ground was broken, rocky, and in parts heavily wooded. Long spurs, forking in all directions, stretched downwards, and between them lay deep, boulder-strewn ravines, with here and there a detached hill. And all these spurs and hills were studded with outworks, with the intervening ground swarming with French skirmishers.

On debouching from Vera, each brigade moved on its

own point of attack, the object being to clear the foreground and gain possession of the main ridge. Throughout the desperate fight which ensued the brigades worked separately, on either side of a deep ravine, though seldom more than a mile apart ; and each upheld the grand traditions of the Division.

The 1st Brigade, moving slightly to the right, found itself confronted by a detached hill, known as the Boar's Back, and held by four companies of the French. Skirmishers from the 43rd and Rifles, however, soon cleared the hill, and the brigade pressed forward up the slope, under a heavy fire from a redoubt on the left. Meanwhile, the 2nd Brigade pushed on up the spur to the west, and, covered by skirmishers, essayed the capture of the troubrous redoubt. So steep was the ascent that the men of the attacking column of the 52nd, which followed the skirmishers of the Rifles and Caçadores, had to use their hands to clamber from rock to rock, and only with difficulty were they able to keep any formation. Then, as they drew near, the enemy charged out of the redoubt and would have driven them down the hill, had not Colborne immediately ordered a counter charge, before which the Frenchmen broke, abandoned the redoubt, and streamed away up the mountain side. The assailants formed up in the redoubt, and were halted for a few minutes to recover their wind, but they were soon at work again, bent on the capture of a second redoubt higher up the spur. From this also were the defenders driven, and step by step the irresistible brigade fought its way to the summit of the ridge, from which the British soldiers looked down for the first time upon France.

While these events were in progress on the left, the 1st Brigade, on the right, kept pace with the general forward movement, and since the opposition met with on this side was not so great as on the other, the soldiers had leisure to send an occasional cheer, across the intervening ravine, to testify to their appreciation of the gallantry of Colborne's men. At length all reached the main ridge, but not content with having driven the army from his position, a great

many men followed the disappearing Frenchmen down the northern slopes of the Pyrenees. Colborne, riding ahead of the pursuers, soon outstripped the men on foot, and accompanied only by his brigade-major, Harry Smith,* of the 95th Rifles, suddenly rode into a ravine through which some 400 French officers and men at the time were passing. Instantly grasping the situation, and preserving his presence of men, he called on the Frenchmen to surrender, and they, fully convinced that a strong column was upon them, gave up their swords and laid down their arms. "Inward trepidation," writes Colborne, "I despatched Harry Smith to bring up the column as quick as possible while I kept the French officer in play, and it fortunately arrived before the French had discovered their error."

After this the pursuers were called back, when the 2nd Brigade went into bivouac on the Puerto de Vera, and the 1st Brigade in a wood at the foot of the Greater Rhune. During the fighting on this day the 43rd had seven men killed and 20 men wounded; while the 52nd, who had borne the brunt of the fighting on the left, lost one sergeant and 11 men killed, and six officers, two sergeants, and 64 men wounded. Major Mein, in command of the Regiment, Captain J. G. Douglas, and Lieutenant Hunter were wounded severely; Major P. Campbell and Captain Sheddon, slightly; and Ensign Frazer so seriously that he died twelve days later. That the regiments did not suffer more severely in the attack on an entrenched position of such strength was due to the magnificent manner in which they were handled, as well as to the high training of the men, who as skirmishers were unsurpassed by any troops in Europe.

An incident of the fight, as showing how the daring act of a young British officer impressed a Spanish battalion of veterans, is worthy of mention:—

* Afterwards Sir Harry Smith, the victor of Aliwal (India), and subsequently Commander-in-Chief in South Africa. Ladysmith was called after his wife, Harrismith after himself, and Aliwal North after his famous victory.

"Giron," writes Napier, "after driving Conroux's advanced post from the gorge leading from Vera to Sarre, had pushed a battalion towards the head of the Great Rhune, and placed a reserve in the gorge to cover his rear from any counter-attack. When his left wing was free to move by the capture of the Boar's Back, he fought his way up abreast with the British line until near the saddle-range, a little to the right of the Puerto; but there his men were arrested by a strong line of abatis, from behind which two French regiments poured a heavy fire. An adventurer named Downie, then a Spanish general, exhorted them and they kept their ranks, yet did not advance; but there happened to be present an officer of the 43rd Regiment, named HAVELOCK,* who being attached to Alten's staff had been sent to ascertain Giron's progress. His fiery temper could not brook the check. He took off his hat, called upon the Spaniards, and putting spurs to his horse at one bound cleared the abatis, and went headlong among the enemy. Then the soldiers, shouting for '*El chico blanco*'—'*the fair boy*,' so they called him, for he was very young and had light hair—with one shock broke through at the very moment the French centre was flying under the fire of Kempt's skirmishers from the Puerto on the left."

The following verses, extracted from an old book of war songs, refer to the incident:—

"Why doth bold Downie waver there?" the noble Alten cried,

"Haste! see what stays the warrior!" and forth that instant hied

His youthful aide-de-camp, whose ear had caught the welcome word,

And on the spur flew Havelock, of the gallant Forty-third.

"He found the sturdy Spaniards, spite of Giron's ardent cry,
But feebly breasting up against their powerful enemy,

* William Havelock, K.H., eventually commanded the 14th Light Dragoons, and was killed at the head of his regiment at the battle of Ramnuggar, 22nd November, 1848.

Who ceaselessly his host's full strength pour'd on their
shelter'd front,
That now withstood the battle's tide—now yielded to its
brunt.

“Tho' boyhood's bloom was on that face, and he unknown
to fame,
Yet Havelock a hero stood, only a boy in name !
For, as he viewed the vet'rans quail before death's
hideous glare,
The man within him glowed to win his maiden chaplet
there !

“So reining in his foaming steed for one devoted blow,
He bared his flaxen locks before high Heaven and the
foe !
Then waved aloft his helmet, cheered the hard pressed
columns on—
‘Follow, brave Spaniards, 'tis the path where liberty is
won !’

“Then dashed the rowels in his steed and urged him swift
away,
Cleared the abatis at a bound, and plunged amid the
fray ;
‘*El chico blanco !*’ shouted then each Andalusian tongue,
While on each olive cheek the tint of burning shame
upsprung.

“In wonder at the daringfeat, ashamed, they quail no
more,
And every soldier seems to have more valour than
before !
‘*El chico blanco !*’ sounds above the battle's fearful cry,
Away the dark-eyed legions plunge to death or victory !

“Close on the fair boy's track pursue the ardent troops of
Spain.
And with one mighty shock hurl down Soult's veterans
again,

They win the pass ! the fields their own ! again their cry
is heard—

'El chico blanco !' still they cheer the brave of the Forty-
third."

On that same day the remainder of the Allied army succeeded in crossing the Lower Bidassoa. A heavy thunderstorm had followed a wild night, and the French were taken unawares, for either they did not expect Wellington to move so soon, or they were deceived by the fact that he purposely left the tents of the various Divisions standing. When, however, Soult realized what was taking place, he made strenuous efforts to stem the tide, but his line was too scattered to avail him much, and he was outnumbered on the Lower Bidassoa, as he was also on the mountains above Vera. In both quarters he was defeated, and his troops, after resisting bravely, were forced to beat a hasty retreat.

During the next few weeks the Allies remained halted in the position which they had won on the 7th October, for Wellington knew that if he advanced at once, there would be considerable difficulty in feeding his men. Moreover he still felt that to invade France while Suchet's French corps occupied Catalonia was to court disaster ; but when he learned that Suchet would not co-operate with Soult, he made up his mind to push on and overthrow his great opponent. The latter had taken advantage of the inaction of the Allies, and had caused to be thrown up a complete chain of entrenchments, some thirty miles long, covering St. Jean de Luz on the right, and extending along the course of the river Nivelle to its upper waters, whence the left of the line stretched eastward to the river Nive, and the centre was guarded by outworks, about the Smaller Rhune and Sarre, on the summits of the Pyrenees to the east of the Greater Rhune.



SIR JOHN COLBORNE, K.C.B.
Afterwards Field Marshal Lord Seaton.



SIR WILLIAM NAPIER, K.C.B.
The Historian of the Peninsular War.

BATTLE OF THE NIVELLE.

(10th November, 1813.)

The French position was of such strength that it was difficult to find a weak spot, but Wellington decided to strike at the centre, cross the Nivelle at the bridge of Amotz, and attempt to divide Soult's force. Before any general advance could be made, however, it was necessary to clear the foreground by capturing the outworks in the Pyrenees. The Light Division regiments were still in position about the Greater Rhune, facing the strongly fortified Smaller Rhune, not a mile distant, and on the evening of the 9th November, they received orders to move, under cover of darkness, a short way to their left front, so as to be ready for the grand advance on the morrow, the signal for which was to be the firing of three guns from a neighbouring mountain. The 43rd had been told off for the attack on the Smaller Rhune, and at 3 a.m. the Regiment moved silently forward for a little distance, when a halt was made, and the men were directed to lie down in close column. As the sun rose, the three guns boomed out the expected signal, and instantly the men sprang to their feet and stood to their arms. In another minute the 43rd was advancing with fixed bayonets to the attack of the foremost entrenchment. William Napier, the Historian, commanded the Regiment in this fight, and he thus describes what followed:—

“The French beheld with astonishment the columns rushing onward from the flank of the Great Rhune. Running to their works with much tumult, they opened a few pieces, which were answered from the top of the Greater Rhune by the mountain-artillery, and two companies of the 43rd were detached to cross the marsh, if possible, and keep down the enemy's fire from the lower part of the Hogs' Back. The action being thus commenced, the remainder of the regiment advanced against the high rocks, from which the French shot fast and thickly; but the thick, even

movement of the line deceived their aim, and the soldiers, running forward very swiftly, turned suddenly between the rocks and the marsh, and were immediately joined by the two companies, which had passed the obstacle notwithstanding its depth. Then all together jumped into the lower works, and the men, exhausted by the exertions, for they had run over half a mile of very rough difficult ground with a wonderful speed, remained for a few minutes lying down and panting within half-pistol-shot of the first stone castle, from which came a sharp and biting musketry. When their breath returned they arose, and with a stern shout, commenced the assault.

"As numerous as the assailants were the defenders, and for six weeks they had been labouring on their well-contrived castles ; but strong and valiant in arms must the skirmishers have been who stood in that hour before the veterans of the 43rd. One French grenadier officer only dared to sustain the rush. Standing alone on the high wall of the first castle and flinging large stones with both his hands, a noble figure, he fought to the last and fell, while his men, shrinking on each side, sought safety among the rocks behind. Close and confused then was the fight ; man met man at every turn ; yet with a rattling fire of musketry, sometimes struggling in the intricate narrow paths, sometimes climbing the loose stone walls, the British soldiers won their desperate way, and soon carried a second castle, named by the French the Magpie's Nest because of a lofty rock within it, on which a few marksmen were perched. From this they were driven into a culminant citadel, called the Donjon, larger than the others, and covered by a natural ditch or cleft in the rocks fifteen feet deep.

"Here they made a final stand, and the assailants, having advanced so as to look into the rear of the rampart and star fort on the table-land below, suspended the vehement throng of their attack for a while ; partly to gather head for storming the Donjon, partly to fire on the enemy beneath, who were warmly engaged with the two battalions of Riflemen, the Portuguese Caçadores, and the 17th Portuguese. This

last regiment was to have followed the 43rd, but seeing how rapidly and surely the latter were carrying the rocks, had moved at once against the traverse on the other side of the marsh. The French thus passed in front, and taught by the fire that they were outflanked on the ridge above ; seeing the 52nd also turning their extreme right by the deep ravine beyond the star fort, abandoned their works below. Then the 43rd, gathering a strong head, stormed the Donjon. Some leaped with a shout down the deep cleft in the rock ; others turned it by the narrow paths on each flank ; and the walls were abandoned at the moment of being scaled. Thus in twenty minutes six hundred old soldiers were hustled out of this labyrinth ; yet not so easily but that the victorious regiment lost eleven officers and sixty-seven men."

The 52nd had, meanwhile, moved forward on the left, and the 95th Rifles kept up the connection between the two regiments, so that, when the French retired from the Smaller Rhune, they found themselves being pressed on the flank. Yet, the men of the Light Division were so out of breath by their climb and hard fighting that their firing did little harm to the fugitive enemy. The Smaller Rhune having been captured, and the 4th Division on the right having dealt equally successfully with the outwork in front of Sarre, the whole line pushed on. But presently the 52nd, after crossing rough and intricate country, and after driving the French outposts out of their entrenchments, began to approach a strong redoubt, held by a battalion. And here occurred one of the fiercest struggles of the day. Napier, who though in the other brigade, was an eye-witness of what took place, does justice to the valour of the 52nd :—

"This formidable work barred the way of the Light Division, yet it was of no value to the defence when the forts on its flanks were abandoned. Colborne approached it in front with the 52nd Regiment. Giron's Spaniards menaced it on Colborne's right, the 4th Division was passing to its rear, and Kempt's brigade was turning it on the left. Colborne, whose military judgment was seldom at

fault, seeing the work must fall, halted, under the brow of the conical hill on which it was situated, to save his men ; but some of Giron's men made a vaunting though feeble demonstration of attacking it on his right and were beaten, and at that moment a staff-officer, without warrant, for Alten on the spot assured the Author of this History that he sent no such order, rode up and directed Colborne to advance. It was not a moment for remonstrance. The steepness of the hill covered his men until he reached the flat top, and then the troops made their rush ; but then a ditch, thirty feet deep, well fraised and palisaded, stopped them short, and the fire of the enemy stretched the foremost in death. The intrepid Colborne, escaping miraculously, for he was always at the head on horseback, immediately led the regiment under the brow to another point, where, thinking to take the French unawares, he made another rush, yet with the same result. At three different places did he rise to the surface in this manner, and each time the head of his column was swept away. Then, holding out a white hand-kerchief, he summoned the commandant, and showed to him how his work was surrounded, whereupon he yielded, having only one man killed ; but on the British side there fell two hundred soldiers of a regiment never surpassed in arms since arms were borne by men—victims to the presumptuous folly of a young staff-officer."

As far as the Light Division was concerned this practically ended the day's fighting, and at nightfall the regiments bivouacked about a mile and a half beyond the captured work in the direction of St. Pé, on the Nivelle. Wellington's grand manoeuvre had been thoroughly successful, and the enemy had been forced back everywhere, but victory was not gained without great loss. Five hundred of the Allies were killed and two thousand four hundred wounded ; while the French lost, in killed, wounded and prisoners, four thousand two hundred and sixty-five. Of the 43rd, Captains CAPEL and MURCHISON, Lieutenant E. FREER and ANGROVE, two sergeants, and seven men were killed ; and Lieutenants Considine, Madden, W. Freer, and Hennel,

Ensign Hill, eight sergeants, and fifty men were wounded. Of the 52nd two sergeants and thirty men were killed ; and Lieutenants Rentall, Yorke, Barlow, Anderson, Kenny, and Agnew, seven sergeants, and one hundred and ninety-five men were wounded.

But considering the terrific hand-to-hand fighting that went on during the day, it is extraordinary that the casualties were not heavier. As on all such occasions, there were many narrow escapes. Lieutenant Madden's life was saved by a biscuit. Before marching in the morning each officer put a large ship's biscuit in his pocket, as an "emergency ration." According to Lieutenant Cooke, who tells the story, these biscuits were about an inch thick and almost as hard as iron, and Madden, on taking his ration, placed it inside the breast of his tunic, laughingly remarking that it would be a good thing to stop a bullet. As events turned out, a bullet actually struck the biscuit, but was deflected, so that it travelled "under the fleshy part of the breast, and round the ribs, to glance off and pierce quite through the thick part of the left arm." Another officer of the 43rd, whose name however Cooke does not mention, had an even more extraordinary escape. He had jumped with impetuosity into the redoubt, to find himself in the midst of the defenders, and a Frenchman making a wild lunge at him, drove his bayonet through the handkerchief which the officer was wearing round his neck, and pinned him up against the wall, thereby nearly throttling him. Thinking to complete his work, the French soldier discharged his musket, but with the only result that the officer's collar was blown away, and himself set free from the bayonet without even a wound.

Then there is the case of Sergeant Mayne, of the 52nd, who, in one of the repulses at the redoubt, found himself left behind in the ditch, from which he was unable to get out. With presence of mind he threw himself flat on his face, and lay still. But a French soldier, seeing him from the parapet, thought to make sure that he was dead, and fired a shot down at him. Fortunately, Mayne had that

morning stuck the billhook of his section on the back of his knapsack, and the Frenchman's bullet struck the iron and was flattened out. After that the sergeant was left alone until the place surrendered, when he rejoined his company unhurt.

Major William Napier led the 43rd on that day with conspicuous gallantry, and was rewarded with a C.B., the Gold Medal, and promotion to Lieutenant-Colonel, but as he was the author of the history of the war he was unable to make mention of his own deeds. Later in life, however, when speaking at a political meeting on the subject of the working classes, he let fall an interesting anecdote of the conduct of a 43rd soldier. He said:—

“I have served my country along with that class ; I know them thoroughly ; I have had them from all parts, of all crafts and trades. I have commanded them ; tried them in all ways, in situations of peril and hardship, in all sorts of privation and misery that it is possible for the human frame to bear. I have seen them writhing under the torture of mangled limbs, even when their very heart's blood has been streaming out, shouting to those who were not disabled to go on for the glory and honour of England—and with these words they died—and all this from men whose names were never likely to be known, so that their brave and noble qualities might be applauded. One instance I will give you in illustration ; for one fact is better than hours of declamation. There was a man in my own regiment named Eccles—a man who very often got himself into scrapes, for he was young, wild, and reckless. On the 9th November, 1913, he committed a crime against military law, which I, as his commanding officer, could not pass over with impunity, and I delivered him over to a court-martial, which sentenced him to corporal punishment. It went against my heart, for orders were issued for battle next day. I thought it hard to give a man stripes on the 9th, and call upon him to fight for the glory of his country on the 10th. I said to him : ‘I pardon you, if you will behave well to-morrow and justify that pardon !’ Well, there was a rocky mountain on which

the French were entrenched, and we could only get at them by passing between the rocks and a marsh, exposed to fire all the time. Towards this pass we ran at our utmost speed ; I was then very strong and active, and carried no weight. I thought it shame to let a soldier, who carried fifty pounds, get before me in the attack, and I went ahead of all but one—that man was Eccles. He was six feet three, straight and well-grown, and though he carried such a burden, I could never pass him. The enemy's fire came from our right, and on my right he kept covering me with his body. We leaped together into the rocks, and then he fell, as one dead, from his exertions. Thus he repaid me for his pardon. He died afterwards a sergeant and a pensioner on the Irish establishment, still young, but worn out by hardship."

BATTLES BEFORE BAYONNE.

(*Sometimes called the BATTLE OF THE NIVE, December, 1813.*)

After the battle of the Nivelle, Soult withdrew his main army to the entrenched position at Bayonne, but left strong bodies of troops to guard the roads, as well as the crossings of the river Nive, which flows almost parallel to the Nivelle, and joins the Adour at Bayonne. On the 11th November, the Allies moved forward, but for the next week or more heavy and incessant rain stopped all progress ; the river became unfordable, and the roads impassable, the mud in the by-roads being knee-deep. So that only a few minor movements could be carried out. The two brigades of the Light Division were posted, between the sea and the river Nive, to the south of Bayonne, the 43rd occupying the churchyard and château of Arcangues and the neighbouring ground, while the 52nd occupied the château of Castlener, close by on the left, both regiments having piquets posted well out in front. On the 23rd November an alteration in the line of the 43rd piquets accidentally brought on a quite unnecessary fight. It was thought that the enemy's outposts opposite Arcangues were too close, and it was

imagined that by moving the British piquets slowly forward the French would accept the hint to withdraw. The orders issued, however, were not sufficiently definite ; the 43rd companies, being instructed to advance, and thinking that they were intended to attack, started off with their accustomed impetuosity ; but they had not gone far before one of the companies found itself exposed to a heavy musketry fire from a fortified farm-house, and the other companies were at the same time subjected to a continuous shower of bullets by the Frenchmen lining the ditches and banks in front. Men fell fast, but still the advance was persevered in. A 43rd soldier was seen to dash ahead of the line, and stand to fire at the enemy, shouting out as he did so, "I have been at the storming of Rodrigo, Badajoz, and San Sebastian ; there is no ball made for me." Yet the next moment, he fell dead. Shortly afterwards, LIEUTENANT BAILLIE, sword in hand, led his company, across the open, against a portion of the ditch which was strongly held. Though the men followed rapidly, he outstripped them, and had almost reached the ditch, when a bullet pierced his head, and his lifeless body pitched amongst the enemy.

A second later Captain Hobkirk and twenty men of the company jumped into the ditch, and while the captain supported the bleeding form of his subaltern—hoping that life was not extinct, the men endeavoured to clamber up the wet clay bank, but before they could extricate themselves they were surrounded and forced to surrender. In other parts of the line the French were pushed back a little, but General Kempt, observing that the enemy intended to dispute the ground, and fearing to bring on a general action, ordered the "retire" to be sounded, when the 43rd companies drew off slowly, though not without some difficulty. It had been an unfortunate day—Lieutenant Baillie killed, Captain Hobkirk captured, Lieutenant Steel wounded, and two sergeants and seventy-six men killed, wounded, or made prisoners—because what was meant to be a demonstration had developed into an attack. After the affair was over, the enemy withdrew, and the British piquets advanced to the desired line.

Nothing further occurred until the 9th December, the intervening time being occupied in strengthening the position at and near Arcangues, in case the French should assume the offensive. On the above-named date Wellington divided his army, for the purpose of forcing the passage of the Nive, and the 2nd Division forded the river near Cambo, the Light Division still remaining on the left bank about Arcangues. On the 10th the enemy advanced in strength against the latter position, and a sharp engagement ensued.

The French attack was a surprise, for the movement which had been observed to be going on in the early morning was thought to be nothing more than a change in the disposition of the piquet line. Then suddenly, loud shouts, mingled with the rattle of musketry, burst forth from the ditches and banks in front of the 43rd companies, and the elated Frenchmen came rushing forward, at the same time sending out a cloud of skirmishers to the left to cut in between the 43rd and the 52nd, and thus endeavour to outflank each. Fortunately, the 43rd piquets were covered by abatis, behind which they stood firm, delivered a telling volley, and then fell back in succession towards the church of Arcangues. The withdrawal had to be carried out rapidly, as the enemy continued to work round the flank, and about a hundred of the 43rd and Rifles were intercepted before they could get away. "The French," says Napier, "were in a hollow road and careless, never doubting that the officer of the 43rd, Ensign Campbell, a youth scarcely eighteen years of age, would surrender; but with a shout he broke into their column sword in hand, and though the struggle was severe and twenty of the 43rd and thirty of the Riflemen with their officer remained prisoners, he reached the church with the rest."

The fighting now centred round the church and church-yard of Arcangues, held by the 43rd; and the French, bringing up twelve guns, essayed to beat down the defence with shot and shell. But the guns having been placed within musket shot of the 43rd were soon silenced and

forced to withdraw under shelter of a ridge, from behind which their fire proved ill-aimed and ineffective. Again they brought them forward and began to play havoc with the defenders of the churchyard, but again they were driven back by the musketry fire. Meanwhile, the 95th Rifles defended the village mansion on the right ; and the 52nd made a gallant resistance near the château of Castlener, until the afternoon, when Wellington ordered up reinforcements. At 3 p.m. Reille, who had been in command of the French, saw that his attempts had failed, and withdrew his troops. Thus ended the COMBAT OF ARCANGUES, in which the 43rd and 52nd had some severe fighting and suffered considerably.

During the next two days the Light Division, always expecting an attack, held their position, but although heavy fighting took place in other parts of the field, only a few shots were fired about Arcangues. On the evening of the second day about a dozen men of the 43rd were reported absent at roll call, and an officer with a sergeant's patrol was at once sent out to search for them. They were eventually discovered in an apple store in a neighbouring house, where, to the officer's astonishment, they were found to be fraternizing with an equal number of French soldiers, who had also come unarmed to raid the apples. But the bond of friendship was something more than the fruit, for, by an extraordinary coincidence, the Frenchmen belonged to the Imperial 43rd Regiment, and were so interested to find the British soldiers wearing on their breastplates the same number as themselves that they seized their hands and entered into the most amicable conversation. The arrival of the officer and his patrol upset the harmony of the meeting, the Frenchmen expecting to be made prisoners, but they were told that they could go, and the British absentees, well-laden with apples, were marched back to their regiment. As we have already had occasion to mention, incidents of this nature were of frequent occurrence during the Peninsular War, for the veteran enemies appear to have had an extraordinary feeling of respect for

one another. When occasion arose they fought to the death, but they declined to stoop to mean trickery from which no great advantage could be gained. In other words, these old soldiers of a century ago were thorough sportsmen, and understood the great game of war to a nicety. At the outposts, where the sentries of each army were constantly within hail, this was particularly noticeable, and Napier gives an interesting example of the way in which they treated one another.

"On the 9th December," he says, "the 43rd was assembled within twenty yards of a French out-sentry, yet he continued his beat for an hour without concern, relying so confidently on the customary system as to place his knapsack on the ground. When the order to advance was given, one of the British soldiers told him to go away, and helped him to replace his pack before the firing commenced. Next morning the French in like manner warned a 43rd sentry to retire. At another time Lord Wellington, desirous to gain the top of a hill occupied by the enemy near Bayonne, ordered his escort of Riflemen to drive the French away, and seeing the soldiers stealing up too close, as he thought, called out to fire, but with a loud voice one of those veterans replied, *No firing!* Holding up the butt of his rifle towards the French, he tapped it in a peculiar way, and at the private signal, which meanted, *We must have the hill for a short time*, the French, who could not maintain, yet would not have relinquished it without a fight if they had been fired upon, quietly retired: yet this signal would never have been made if the post had been one capable of a permanent defence, so well did those veterans understand war and its proprieties."

On the 13th December was fought the last and the greatest of the battles before Bayonne. It took place near St. Pierre, on the right bank of the Nive, and the fight in its earlier stages was maintained by Hill's Corps, against which Soult hurled all his strength. Both French and British fought as they had never fought before, as if determined to decide matters once and for all, but Wellington proved too much

for Soult, who was eventually driven back everywhere, and forced to take up a new line of defence behind the Adour, from Bayonne upstream.

The 43rd and 52nd took no active part in this concluding battle of the campaign of 1813, but they had had their share of fighting, during the previous three days, on the banks of the Nive. The casualties in the 43rd consisted of one man killed ; Lieutenant-Colonel W. Napier and thirteen men wounded ; and one sergeant and twenty men missing (prisoners). Of the 52nd, CAPTAIN J. G. DOUGLAS and four men were killed ; Lieutenant-Colonel Mein, Major K. Snodgrass, Captain Temple, Lieutenant Lord C. Spencer, Ensign Radford, two sergeants, and thirteen men were wounded, and four men were taken prisoners.

Thus the year closed, the Light Division keeping Christmas in true British style in winter quarters in the vicinity of Arcangues.

CHAPTER XII.

CAMPAIGNS OF 1814—1815.

THE CLOSE OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.

SOULT's position now extended from Bayonne, on the left, along the right bank of the river Adour for about twelve miles, and thence south-east, along the Bidouse, to the Pyrenees. The French thus held a line on a wide curve, and Wellington, based on the sea and with his headquarters at St. Jean de Luz, prepared for his final effort. With the exception of some minor cavalry skirmishes, no operations took place until early in February, when the campaign which ended the war commenced.

The Light Division, in the meanwhile, had moved across the Nive, so as to be in readiness for the advance of Wellington's right wing against the left of the French position on the Bidouse. By this movement the British commander hoped to induce Soult to withdraw his forces from Bayonne, and so enable the greater part of the allies to cross the Adour between that town and the sea. On the 14th February the operations began, and Hill, moving eastward, drove back the French outposts behind the Bidouse, when Soult did as Wellington desired. Observing that his distant flank was in danger, he left a force in Bayonne, and marched the remainder to Orthes, where he intended to concentrate for battle. By the 26th February eight thousand of the Allies had been passed across the Adour below Bayonne by a stupendous bridge of boats upwards of three hundred yards in length—an undertaking which Napier says "must always rank among

the prodigies of war." Hope, who had conducted this crossing, immediately invested Bayonne, in order to prevent the garrison from joining Soult, and opened up communications with Beresford on the Gave de Pau. On the following day was fought the **BATTLE OF ORTHES**.

BATTLE OF ORTHES.

(27th February, 1814.)

The 43rd and the 1st Battalion of the 95th had the misfortune to miss this fight, as they had been sent to the rear, a few days before, to obtain new clothing, but the remainder of the Light Division played a conspicuous part in the battle, and the 52nd, under Colonel Colborne, performed such valuable service as to receive special mention in Lord Wellington's despatch.

The position taken up by Soult to the north of the Gave de Pau extended along the ridge and spurs stretching from Orthes on the left to the village of St. Boes on the right, the greater part of the French army being disposed in the centre. Hill's corps, opposite Orthes, threatened Soult's left, while the 4th and 7th Divisions assailed his right, and the 3rd and 6th Divisions simultaneously attacked the centre, the Light Division forming a reserve behind an old Roman camp, situated about a mile in front of St. Boes, but with a wide marsh intervening. Such was the opening phase of the fight, and for three hours the Allies hurled themselves at the enemy's position in vain. Try as they would they could make no impression on the French, who repulsed each attack and began to cause confusion in the assailants' ranks. Soult imagined that victory was within his grasp, and ordered up his reserves to complete it; but Wellington saw his intention and immediately made fresh dispositions. Ordering the 3rd and 6th Divisions to assault the French left, he instructed the 52nd to advance across the marsh and attack the flank and rear of that portion of the French army which was at the time engaged with the

4th Division about St. Boes. This was the opportunity for which the 52nd had been waiting, and how they profited by it shall be told in the words of the historian Napier:—

“Colonel Colborne,” he says, “so often distinguished, immediately led this regiment across the marsh under a skirmishing fire, the men sinking at every step above the knees, in some places to the middle; yet, still pressing forwards with that stern resolution and order to be expected from the veterans of the Light Division, soldiers who had never yet met their match in the field, they soon obtained footing on firm land, and ascending the heights in line at the moment when Taupin, on the French right, was pushing vigorously through St. Boes, and when Foy and D’Armagnac, hitherto more than masters of their positions, were being assailed on the left by the 3rd and 6th Divisions.

“With a mighty shout and a rolling fire, the 52nd soldiers dashed forwards between Foy and Taupin, beating down a French battalion in their course and throwing everything before them into disorder. General Bechaud was killed, Foy was dangerously wounded, and his troops discouraged by his fall and by this sudden storm from a quarter where no enemy was expected, for the march of the 52nd had been hardly perceived save by the skirmishers, got into confusion, and the disorder spread to Reille’s wing, he also was forced to fall back and take a new position. The narrow pass behind St. Boes was thus opened, and Wellington, seizing the critical moment, thrust the 4th and 7th Divisions, Vivian’s cavalry, and two batteries of artillery through, and spread a front beyond. Victory was thus secured.”

Out-numbered and out-manoeuvred, Soult realized that the battle was lost, but making the best possible use of the ground, he covered his retreat in a masterly manner, and succeeded in withdrawing his disorganized divisions, with the loss of six guns and four thousand men.

The 52nd casualties consisted of seven men killed, and seven officers, two sergeants, and seventy-seven men wounded. The wounded officers were Majors P. Campbell

and K. Snodgrass, Captains the Earl of March and C. Yorke, and Lieutenants Holford, Nixon, and Leaf.

BATTLE OF TOULOUSE.

(10th April, 1814.)

After his defeat at Orthes, Soult retreated to Aire, breaking down the bridges across the rivers and streams, and thus delaying the pursuit. Hill, however, came up with him on the 2nd March, and, after a sharp engagement, forced him to abandon his magazines at Aire and beat a hasty retreat along both banks of the Adour. On the 9th March the Light Division went into cantonments at Barcelonne, while Wellington sent Beresford with 12,000 men to accept the surrender of Bordeaux, and on the 19th the advance was resumed. Next day Wellington attacked Soult at Tarbes, defeated him, and drove him to Toulouse.

Difficulties now beset Wellington's army, rendering a rapid pursuit impossible. Without heavy guns, and a pontoon train sufficient to bridge the Garonne, nothing could be done, and such things impeded the march of the troops, so that it was not until the 28th March that the Allies gained touch with Soult's outposts. Further difficulties were created by the flooded state of the river Garonne and by the swampy nature of the ground about Toulouse, and Wellington was obliged to alter his plans more than once, but eventually, on the 10th April, was fought the last battle of the war.

Toulouse, the capital and principal arsenal of southern France, was a place of very considerable importance, since it was the meeting place of a great many roads, and it commanded the chief crossings of the Garonne. The city itself was walled in, and had flanking towers, while the surrounding suburbs were strongly fortified with outworks and entrenchments admirably arranged on commanding heights. On the west flowed the river Garonne, and on the north and east the Languedoc Canal presented an obstacle only to be crossed by certain bridges. Immediately

east of the canal stood two fortified hills, Sacarin and Cambon, and half a mile or so farther east the long high ridge of Mont Rave, crowned with redoubts and entrenchments. Soult had had ample time to improve the fortifications, and well aware of the natural strength of his position, he felt convinced that the Allies would fail to turn him out.

Wellington decided to attack from the north and east. He ordered Hill to hold the loop formed by the river to the west of Toulouse, and to threaten the fortified suburb of St. Cyprien ; Picton to make a false attack from the north towards the canal ; Freyre's Spaniards to assault the northern end of Mont Rave and then move along the ridge ; the Light Division to fill the gap between Picton and Freyre ; and Beresford with two divisions to attack the enemy's main position on Mont Rave from the east.

The troops commenced to put these plans into execution quite early on the morning of the 10th April, and by 6 a.m. the several commands were well on their way to their respective destinations. Beresford had a long and exposed flank march to make before reaching the point from which his attack was to be launched, and Freyre had been instructed not to deliver his attack until Beresford was in position. But the Spanish general, anxious to gain glory for himself, disregarded his instructions, and rushed his men to the attack before Beresford was ready. The Spaniards fought with the greatest gallantry and gained the summit of the ridge, but only to be suddenly assailed by a terrific fire from the enemy's guns and muskets. From this they took refuge in a hollow, where they were immediately surrounded and in a few minutes fifteen hundred of them were killed. The remainder broke and fled before the pursuing French. Almost at the same time, Picton, like Freyre, allowed his impetuosity to get the better of him, and delivered a real instead of a false attack against the canal, with the result that he was heavily repulsed, and lost four hundred men.

So far Soult had every reason to congratulate himself

on his dispositions, and matters did not look too hopeful for the Allies. Everything now depended on Beresford, who, disregarding the rout of the Spaniards, continued to carry out his original instructions. The Light Division, from its position on the north, was able to check the pursuit of the Spaniards, and subsequently to drive the French from the northern end of the ridge of Mont Rave. Then Beresford marshalled his two divisions for the assault, and though the battle raged furiously well into the afternoon, victory often hanging in the balance, eventually the French were forced from the hill into the suburb of St. Etienne.

This practically ended the battle as well as the war, for before Wellington could make arrangements for investing Toulouse, the enemy evacuated the city on the night of the 11th April, and taking the road to the south, succeeded in escaping to Villefranque—a distance of 22 miles. On the 12th, Wellington entered Toulouse, and was received with acclamations of joy by the French inhabitants, who had thrown off their allegiance to Napoleon and had declared for the Bourbons. On the following day the news of Napoleon's abdication was received from Paris, and messengers were sent to Soult asking him to treat for peace. This, however, he refused to do, and the Light Division and other troops were put in motion to Villefranque, but only to be recalled a few days later, when the preliminaries for a permanent peace were entered into.

The 43rd and 52nd remained in cantonments near Toulouse for some seven weeks, thoroughly enjoying the amusements provided by the city. Private John Timewell, of the 43rd, who kept a diary of the war, says:—

“Never was men used better than the inhabitants done to the English soldiers; the friendliest people I met with in all my travels; never was soldiers used half so well in England. A loaf of ration bread in this town was 76 lbs. and white as your quartern loaves in England. There we had puncheons of wine in every house, as good as you pay in England five shillings a bottle. If you had but seen the

soldiers in glory there, with fifty glasses on their table all full from morning to night, and even washed potatoes in it, it was so plenty." But early in June the order came for the Light Division to proceed to Bordeaux and embark for England. At Bazas, the Caçadores and the 17th Portuguese Regiment, having been formed into a brigade, took leave of the Division, and together with all the Spanish and Portuguese followers, marched for their own country. Colonel Colborne describes the parting as "a very affecting scene," the British troops being drawn up in two ranks, and the Portuguese passing between them.

"This," writes Sir John Cooke, of the 43rd, "was the last of the Light Division. The separation now came. Though amongst the regiments that composed it there existed an unanimity which was almost without parallel in war, yet there was a shade of difference between them, a something peculiar to each corps, distinguishing it from all others; which was the more remarkable as amongst them there was a sort of fraternal compact, and it has occurred that three brothers held commissions at the same time in the 43rd, 52nd, and Rifle Corps.

"The 43rd were a gay set—the dandies of the army; the great encouragers of dramatic performances, dinner parties, and balls, of which their head-quarters was the pivot.

"The 52nd were highly gentlemanly men, of a steady aspect; they mixed little with other corps, but attended the theatricals of the 43rd with circumspect good humour, and now and then relaxed, but were soon again the 52nd.

"The Rifle Corps were skirmishers in every sense of the word, a sort of wild sportsmen, and up to every description of fun and good humour; nought came amiss; the very trees responded to their merriment, and scraps of their sarcastic rhymes passed current through all the camps and bivouacs.

"In this way the brothers of the three regiments met together, each being the very type of the corps to which he belonged. Amongst them are to be enumerated the Napiers, the Maddens, the Booths, the Rowans, the Whichcotes, the

Meins, the Dobbs, the Patricks, the Harvests, and others. And before we take our farewell, I may affirm that, although these troops were bound together by an iron code of discipline, no Roman tribune could ever boast of more camp orators, nor was there any fraternity that ever lived in happier independence when off duty."

Such was the famous Light Division, which for five continuous years had fought with honour under Wellington, as indeed had done all the magnificent soldiers of his army.

In the following words Napier concludes his *Battles and Sieges*:-

"Thus the war terminated, and with it all remembrance of the veterans' services. Yet those veterans had won nineteen pitched battles and innumerable combats ; had made or sustained ten sieges and taken four great fortresses ; had twice expelled the French from Portugal, once from Spain ; had penetrated France, and killed, wounded, or captured two hundred thousand enemies—leaving of their own number forty thousand dead, whose bones whiten the plains and mountains of the Peninsula."

Fourteen "Battle Honours," emblazoned on the Colours of the Regiment, recall the victories which it assisted to win during this long war.

THE OLD COLOURS OF THE FORTY-THIRD.*

A moth-eaten rag on a worm-eaten pole,
It does not look likely to stir a man's soul :
'Tis the deeds that were done 'neath the moth-eaten rag,
When the pole was a staff, and the rag was a flag.

For on many a morn in our grandfathers' days,
When the bright sun of Portugal broke through the haze,
Disclosing the armies arrayed in their might,
It showed the old flag in the front of the fight.

* Lines written by General Sir Edward Hamley, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

By rivers, o'er bridges, past vineyards and downs,
Up the valleys where stood, all deserted, the towns,
It followed the French, and, when they turned to bay,
It just paused for the fight, then again led the way.

And whenever it chanced that a battle was nigh,
They saw it then hung like a sign in the sky,
And they soon learned to know it—its crimson and white—
O'er the line of red coats and of bayonets bright.

Then the banner was fanned by the breezes of Spain ;
Salamanca beheld it afar on the plain ;
Then onward it pressed in aerial dance,
Up the steep mountain pathways that led into France.

And as fast as the men, who rejoiced as it flew—
Who defended and worshipped it, died for it, too,
The boldest in England were eager to claim
The honour to guard it and brighten its fame.

So the moths have been feasting this many a day
On the names of old battles, once broidered so gay,
Till the banner is dust, like the warriors renowned,
Who, in bringing it victory, passed under ground.

In the Church, where it hangs, when the moon gilds the
graves
And the aisles and the arches, it swells and it waves ;
While below a faint sound as of combat is heard
From the ghostly array of the old Forty-third.

The deeds of the Light Division are also alluded to in the Rifle Brigade song “Colonel Coote Manningham,” four verses of which run as follows :—

“To Spain next went The Rifle Corps,
For Boney then was bent on war ;
He didn't think we'd take the floor,
And dance our way to glory !

Masséna was our *vis-a-vis*,
 (They called him Duke of Rivoli),
 But we'd a Duke as good as he,
 To fight for England's glory !

Chorus :

“Colonel Coote Manningham, he was the man !
 For he invented a capital plan,
 He formed a Corps of Rifle Men,
 To fight for England's glory !

“For the Chestnut Troop, so gallant and gay,
 Would open the ball at the break of day,
 With : ‘Here comes Ross with the R.H.A.
 To fight for England's glory !’
 King Joseph then would join the dance
 Or Soult or Victor, as might chance,
 But we'd soon drown their ‘Vive la France !’
 With cheers for England's glory !

Chorus : Colonel Coote Manningham, etc.

“And many a time with the Forty-third,
 We were up to the call of ‘The Early Bird,’
 When Craufurd's bugle gave the word,
 To march for England's glory !
 To Talavera's field we came,
 And many a breach, all steel and flame,
 Saw the Green Jackets uphold the fame
 Of England and her glory !

Chorus : Colonel Coote Manningham, etc.

“Oh ! those were the days of England's pride !
 With the Fifty-second at our side,
 If the Light Bobs lived, or the Light Bobs died,
 'Twas all for England's glory !

Corunna, Badajoz, Nivelle,
Barrosa and Toulouse as well,
Are names of deathless pride that tell
Of the days of England's glory !

Chorus: Colonel Coote Manningham, etc."

EXPEDITION TO THE NETHERLANDS, 1814.

(*War with France.*)

In 1810 Holland had become part of France, but in November 1813, after Napoleon's defeat at Leipsic, it was restored to the House of Orange, and Belgium annexed to its dominions. On the 6th December of the same year the Prince of Orange was proclaimed sovereign prince of the United Netherlands, though the French continued to occupy the principal fortresses and refused to evacuate them.

While the 1st Battalion 52nd was fighting on the Nive, the 2nd Battalion embarked at Ramsgate (9th December 1813) to join Sir Thomas Graham's army in Holland, where an Allied force was operating against the French. Landing at Stevense on the 17th December, the battalion joined the Light Brigade, commanded by Major-General KENNETH MACKENZIE (a former 52nd commanding officer), and was immediately placed on outpost duty at Halteren, near the fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom.

Early in 1814 an advance was made upon Antwerp, which was bombarded by the Allies, with a view to destroying the French fleet lying there, and on the 13th January the 52nd took part in an attack on the enemy's outposts at MERXEM, and drove them into Antwerp with considerable loss. Several minor skirmishes took place, during January and February, in front of the fortress, but early in the latter month the bombardment was abandoned, and the 52nd, with the remainder of the force, marched south to join the main army of the Allies (British, Russians,

and Prussians). On the night of the 8th—9th March Bergen-op-Zoom was attacked, but without success ; and when the assault was abandoned, the 52nd, who had been in reserve, covered the withdrawal of the troops. Nothing further of importance occurred, as the net which Europe had been gradually drawing round Napoleon soon held him fast, and he was compelled to abdicate the throne of France. The island of Elba, in the Mediterranean, was ceded to him, and there he was permitted to reside, with a large retinue and a pension from France. Peace was signed in Paris on the 11th April 1814, and the news of the fact, as has been said, reached Wellington at Toulouse two days later.

The 2nd Battalion of the 52nd marched to Brussels, where it was quartered during May, June, and July ; in August it moved to Antwerp ; in September to Tournai ; in November to Ypres ; and thence eventually to Grammont, where it remained until the opening of the Waterloo campaign in the spring of 1815.

EXPEDITION TO NEW ORLEANS, 1814—1815.

(England against America.)

In the meantime the 43rd (1st Battalion) had proceeded on active service to the New World, where fighting was going on with the Americans. The Regiment arrived in England from the Peninsula in July, and on the 10th October it embarked for America, not however to reach its destination until the last day of the year.

Since 1812 a half-hearted war had been in progress between the two countries, but owing to the impossibility of sending out reinforcements from England as long as the Peninsular War lasted, the fighting, until 1814, was restricted to naval engagements and the defence of the Canadian frontier. On the termination, however, of hostilities in the south of France, the British Government decided to despatch reinforcements to America, and Major-General Ross was placed in command of a force of 2,500 men, which was

increased by a further 2,000 at the West Indies. With this small army, Ross determined to attack the American capital—Washington, and bring matters to a head. Landing on the 19th August, he encountered the Americans, on the 24th, in position outside Bladensburg, and although outnumbered by two to one, Ross hurled his troops at the enemy, drove him in disorder from the field, and captured half his guns. Only four miles now lay between the victorious British and the American capital, but the General, unwilling to cause unnecessary bloodshed, and being moreover under instructions merely to assist the fleet in raiding the American coast towns, did not push on into the city, but sent forward a flag of truce, to demand an indemnity. Ross himself accompanied the party, which was treacherously fired upon, immediately on entering the town. The General's horse was shot under him and one of his men was killed. The laws of civilized warfare having been thus outraged, Ross had no hesitation in ordering the destruction of Washington, which was forthwith burnt to the ground. The next objective was Baltimore, but this proved too strong to be attacked by the British force, although the enemy had been routed in an engagement outside the town, and in this engagement General Ross unfortunately was killed. The expedition then sailed for Jamaica, to await reinforcements, and in December got under weigh again for the American coast, picking up at Negril Bay their newly appointed General, Keane, and some 3,000 fresh troops, and proceeding at once to attempt the capture of New Orleans, a town lying about a hundred miles inland from the mouth of the Mississippi.

Admiral Cochrane, in command of the fleet, soon discovered that his ships would be unable to enter the river—so shallow was the water over the bar at its mouth, and so strong were the fortifications which guarded the entrance. He knew, however, of another route of approach to the vicinity of the town which could be taken by the ships' boats, and he and General Keane forthwith determined on a bold plan, which they succeeded in carrying through

with extraordinary skill and daring. At some distance from the sea and on one side of the town, lay a large bay, or lake, to reach which it was necessary to navigate a very difficult channel. Yet, before daylight on the 13th December, the men-of-wars' boats in three divisions had entered Lake Borgne, where they found five American gun-boats. The British sailors straightway attacked, and after a desperate hand-to-hand fight, boarded and captured all five vessels. After this brilliant affair, the way seemed clear enough, and by the 22nd December, all the land forces had been transported to an island in the lake, whence, shortly afterwards, they were conveyed to the mainland, for the commencement of the final advance on New Orleans. The town stood half a dozen miles away ; the American piquets were surprised and captured ; the militiamen were put to flight, and the British force moved forward. Everything had succeeded beyond expectation, and there appeared to be nothing capable of checking the tide of the British invasion. There was, indeed, on the high road to New Orleans what appeared to be a half-completed battery, though seemingly unmanned, if not also unarmed. For some inscrutable reason, General Keane now decided to halt, and during the night the American General, Jackson, brought every available man out of New Orleans, and attacked the invaders. Under cover of darkness, a struggle of the most bloody description took place, and ended in the rout of the Americans. When daylight appeared on the following morning (Christmas Eve), the British troops imagined that they would be ordered to push on, capture the town, and eat their Christmas dinner in New Orleans. But the General hesitated, and thus gave the Americans the opportunity to man their battery by the roadside and throw up earthworks on each side of it. At this juncture, Sir Edward Pakenham, accompanied by Major-General Gibbs, arrived from England, to take command, but even then no advance was ordered, until, on the 28th, a feeble attack was made on the American trenches, to result in a withdrawal of the British force.

All this took place before the 43rd arrived on the scenes, and the Regiment was somewhat surprised to find that operations had not yet begun. The position in which the British force had lain for upwards of a fortnight was situated in a flat open plain, bounded on the right by swampy woods and on the left by the Mississippi river. Five and a half miles in front lay the unfortified city of New Orleans, with nothing to protect it except the hastily thrown up earthworks, about a mile and a half from the British bivouacs. The arrival of the 43rd and the 7th Fusiliers added to the congestion of the camp, and the General realized that something would have to be done; yet, although he had in his force hundreds of men who had proved their worth at Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, St. Sebastian, and in a score of pitched battles, he hesitated to employ them to brush aside the almost insignificant entrenchments which the Americans had thrown up. Instead, he determined to turn their flank, to effect which it was necessary to cut a canal, nearly a mile in length, across a neck of land separating a creek from the river, to enable the ships' boats to convey the troops for the flank attack to the Mississippi. Day and night the 43rd and other regiments laboured at the canal, and on the 7th January, 1815, the waterway was completed.

General Pakenham's plan now became known. That night the flank attack, consisting of 1400 men, were to be conveyed in the boats through the canal, land on the further side of the river, surprise the enemy's battery, and turn the guns on the American entrenchments, which were to be assaulted simultaneously in front by the main force. Day-break was fixed as the moment for the assault, and a rocket, fired from the General's headquarters, was to be the signal for the advance of the front attack, and for the flank attack to turn their guns on the enemy. Yet these plans, so carefully laid, were destined to break down. No steps were taken to discover if the passage of the flankers was progressing satisfactorily, and only afterwards was it learned that, when the rocket went up, they were still four miles from their goal.

In spite of the care with which everything had been arranged, misfortune overtook the main attack from the very outset. The assaulting columns pushed forward at once, but a hitch occurred in bringing up the scaling ladders, necessary to storm the work, and the delay was fatal. A withering fire burst upon the unfortunate assailants from the enemy's works, and at the same moment, to everyone's consternation, the guns, which the British flanking party had been intended to capture, opened fire, from across the river, on the exposed flank of the advancing troops. It was in vain that the most obstinate courage was displayed ; it was in vain that Pakenham, Gibbs, and Keane rallied the men, and led them on. No troops could live under the galling fire, and the dead and wounded lay scattered over the field. Pakenham was killed, Gibbs and Keane were mortally wounded, and although some of the outlying works were actually captured, the retreat soon set in.

Of the 43rd only one company was engaged, the remainder, together with the Fusiliers, being kept in reserve under General Lambert, and it was well that these seasoned troops were at hand to cover the retreat, and thus prevent the annihilation of the whole force. It was thought at the time that had the reserves been thrown into the fight, the day might have been won, as Colonel Thornton's flanking party eventually captured all the American works and guns on that side of the river, and enfiladed the enemy's lines. But it was not to be ; General Lambert thought only of saving the survivors from further disaster ; and of the small force engaged 3 generals, 7 colonels, 75 officers, and 1781 men had already fallen.

Captain Robert Simpson's company of the 43rd accompanied the assaulting party on what was termed the Crescent Battery, during the opening of the general frontal attack, and fought with extraordinary valour. Regardless of heavy casualties, the party forced its way into the battery, and held it tenaciously until the main attack was in full retreat, when the remnant of the gallant little party contrived to escape. Of the company Lieutenants DUNCAN CAMPBELL and

MEYRICKE, 1 sergeant, 1 bugler, and 11 privates were killed; 2 sergeants and 19 men were wounded; 2 buglers and 15 men were made prisoners; and Captain Simpson was severely wounded and taken prisoner. Another officer of the 43rd Captain WILKINSON, acting Brigade Major, had his horse shot under him, but immediately regaining his feet, rushed forward to the assault, only however to be almost instantly killed.

A flag of truce, to bury the dead, ended this disastrous day, and the fighting was never resumed, as the Americans showed no inclination to harrass the British camp, except by an occasional shot from their guns, one of which entered the tent of Lieutenant Darcy, of the 43rd, and took off both his legs. Thus ended the ill-fated expedition to New Orleans, for, on the 18th January, less than a fortnight after the landing of the 43rd, the force withdrew to the ships, which forthwith sailed for Mobile Bay. To add to the disgust of everyone who took part in the expedition, it was afterwards discovered that peace between England and America had been signed, at Ghent, on Christmas Eve,—two weeks before the fighting took place. Camp was formed at Dauphin Island, upon which the troops were landed in February, and there they remained until the 8th April, when they sailed for England, to find themselves, alas, just too late to take part in the battle of Waterloo.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WATERLOO CAMPAIGN, 1815.

England, Prussia, Belgium, and Holland, supported by Russia and Austria, against France.

WHEN the year opened, England was at peace with all Europe, and moreover, as we have just said, had signed a treaty of peace with America. In spite of this, however, it was thought advisable to send more troops across the Atlantic, and, on the 4th January, the 1st Battalion of the 52nd embarked at Portsmouth, for the Cove of Cork, where the reinforcements for America were ordered to rendezvous. When all the ships had assembled, two attempts were made to put to sea, but on each occasion a severe gale drove the vessels back to harbour, and before a further attempt could be made, the fleet was recalled, and instructed to proceed to Plymouth, where the Regiment arrived on the 22nd March.

The reason of the change of plans was soon made known : Napoleon had quitted Elba, and had landed in the south of France, where he was welcomed by the people, and more especially by his soldiers. The Bourbon king who had been placed on the throne of France fled from Paris, and Napoleon again defied all Europe.

On the 22nd March, the 52nd sailed from Plymouth, and four days later landed at Ostend, thence marching to Brussels, and, on the 7th April to Grammont. At that place the 2nd Battalion of the Regiment, as mentioned in the last chapter, had been quartered for some months, and the 1st Battalion was now instructed to take over all

effective men, after which the remnant of the 2nd Battalion was ordered to return to England.

Made up in this manner to full strength, the 52nd took its place in Adam's Brigade of Clinton's Division, together with the 95th and the 71st, and on the 27th May arrived at Lessines. Thence, shortly afterwards, it moved to the neighbourhood of Quevre-au-camps, some thirteen miles west of Mons, and was billeted in the villages thereabouts, for the purpose of drill and instruction. At that time little was known of Napoleon's intentions, but it was generally supposed that he would, sooner or later, advance on Brussels; and, early in June, the situation was as follows:— At Brussels Wellington had his headquarters, and kept Cole's and Picton's Divisions in reserve; in front, *i.e.* towards the south, Hill's Corps (of which Clinton's Division formed a part) was on the right, stretching from the Scheldt up to about Ath; next came the Prince of Orange's Corps, at Mons, Enghien, and Nivelles. Covering these two Anglo-Dutch Corps, the Dutch and Belgian cavalry were posted further to the front; while Lord Uxbridge's British cavalry were in rear, about Grammont. The Prussians prolonged the line to the left, with the headquarters of their corps at Charleroi, Namur, Ciney, and Liége. So that the whole line was about one hundred miles in length, and roughly-speaking forty or fifty miles in front (*i.e.* south) of Brussels. The Russians and Austrians were too far away, to the east and south, to take any part in the campaign, though, had Napoleon delayed, they would doubtless have closed in on him. Of this he was well aware, and it was probably for that reason that he determined to carry out his usual plan of striking rapidly and with all his strength.

Until the 12th June no one was aware of Napoleon's intentions, but on that day a rumour went round camp that he was on the move. Two days later it was known for certain that he was advancing rapidly, and on the morning of the 16th, as the 52nd was being formed up to march off to the usual drill, orders came for Clinton's Division to assemble, at 10 a.m., a mile away, on the road to Ath.

Hardly expecting that the climax was so near at hand, yet thinking, from the suddenness of the order to move, that something extraordinary was about to happen, the Division formed up at the appointed time, and immediately marched towards Ath. Leaving that town on the flank, the column was directed to take the road to Enghien, and before reaching the latter place, the troops were turned about, with orders to proceed to Soignies—an order which induced them to believe that they were moving to meet the French, and filled them with the wildest enthusiasm.

To the staff officers of the army Napoleon's plans were now apparent. He had determined to invade Belgium, and to defeat Blücher's Prussians, as well as Wellington's British and allied troops, before the rest of Europe could come to their assistance. His several corps had been gradually moving up towards the frontier, and when he himself left Paris on the 12th June, he had made up his mind that he would cross the frontier on the 15th, and be in possession of Brussels shortly afterwards. He concentrated rapidly, and on the night of the 14th, nearly the whole of his army was in bivouac close to the Prussian outposts.

It seems certain that Wellington, at Brussels, was not kept as fully informed of the movements of the enemy as he should have been, and until the afternoon of the 15th June he was unable to decide whether Napoleon intended to advance on the Belgian capital, in one column, by the direct road via Charleroi, or whether he would divide his force, so as to send a portion of it by the western route, through Mons and Hal. The Duke and his staff had weighed matters carefully. They knew that the Prussians, on the left, were so posted as to cover all the approaches to the capital eastward of the Charleroi-Brussels road; that the British and Dutch-Belgians covered the approaches to the westward of the same road; while the reserves in Brussels were held ready to move whithersoever they should be most needed. At length came the news that, at dawn on the 15th, the French had moved forward, had driven back the Prussians, had occupied Charleroi, and were pushing north-

wards to Quatre Bras. A few hours later, Wellington learned that no French troops were moving in the direction of Mons, and thus made aware of the fact that his right flank was safe, he had no further doubt as to his course of action. He immediately issued orders for the British to advance eastward, in the direction of Quatre Bras—the point where the Nivelles-Ligny road crossed the main road from Charleroi to Brussels. And it was this order which set the 52nd and the rest of the army in motion on the morning of the 16th.

During the afternoon of this day, the men of Clinton's Division distinctly heard the sounds of guns in the distance, but when, at midnight, Adam's Brigade halted at Braine-le-Comte, in pouring rain, the whereabouts of the enemy were still unknown even to General Adam himself. Yet, not far away, stirring events had been in progress. On the evening of the 15th, Wellington, having issued all his orders, attended the famous ball given by the Duchess of Richmond in Brussels. A great many other British officers were also present, though all had been warned that they must slip away early, and join their regiments, marching to the front. Straight from the festive scene, therefore, many rode all night, to overtake the troops only as they were becoming engaged with the enemy.

At eleven o'clock next morning, Wellington reached the position which his troops were taking up at Quatre Bras, but, by that time, only some 7000 Dutch and Belgians, under the Prince of Orange, had arrived. Fortunately, however, Napoleon appeared to be directing all his energies against Blücher's 80,000 Prussians, in the neighbourhood of Ligny, and Wellington rode off to confer with the Prussian Field Marshal, eventually agreeing to go to his assistance, if not himself attacked. But he had returned to Quatre Bras barely two hours before Napoleon sent Ney against him, and the battle which raged for the remainder of the day only ended in a victory for Wellington by the timely arrival of the reserves from Brussels. Blücher, in the meanwhile, had been severely handled by Napoleon, who, after a

bloody conflict of nearly six hours, succeeded in breaking the centre of the Prussian line, and driving the defeated army from the field.

That night Wellington was as ignorant of the forced retreat of the Prussians from Ligny, as were the men of Adam's Brigade of the operations of the day; for the latter, on reaching Braine-le-Comte, were still many miles to the westward of Quatre Bras. But, even had they been made aware of the recent events, they would have been powerless to hasten forward, since they had been on the march all day, and were now suffering from the effects of the weather. Soaked to the skin, everyone sought shelter from the pelting rain in the houses and barns, until a couple of hours after midnight, when the march was resumed as far as Nivelles. Another halt was then made, so that the men should have their breakfasts, after which the Division having received orders to turn about, moved off along the road leading to Hougoumont, Waterloo, and Brussels. The arduous march began to tell on everyone, but the prospect of a fight kept the men going, and the sight of some French columns in motion in the afternoon put new life into them. It was evident that an engagement could not be long delayed, and many imagined that it would take place before nightfall.

Towards evening Adam's brigade turned off the main road down the avenue of the Château of Hougoumont, which it was thought was to be their quarters for the night. The Regiment had not proceeded along the avenue for any great distance, however, before they were ordered to retrace their steps, and after a while they were formed up and halted in a ploughed field, near the village of Merbe Braine. Other troops were marching on to the neighbouring ground in all directions, and though darkness was approaching, it still seemed as if the fight could not be postponed till the morrow. Masses of French troops were visible at no great distance, and a few British guns had already opened fire on some of the enemy's infantry, while parties of cavalry were briskly engaged in more than one part of the field.

But the night closed in without matters going further,

and it was a night not easily forgotten by those who slept out in it. Rain fell in torrents, so that the bivouacs became a sea of mud, and the soldiers, lying out in the open, were drenched to the skin. There was little sleep, for sleep was impossible in the incessant downpour, and the feeling that daylight would usher in the first stage of a great battle kept the men wide awake. Before darkness had set in, they had seen that the whole British army was taking up an extended position, and that the French army was closing up less than a mile away. But it was only when day at length broke and the heavy rain ceased that the situation became fully apparent, and left no doubt as to the severity of the coming struggle. Still, before any movement took place, the men had time to clean and dry their muskets, and prepare themselves for the day's work. The officers then heard, for the first time, full details of the events of the two previous days. Throughout the march of the day before they had continually overtaken parties of wounded men, as well as regiments which had taken part in the battle, being sent back from Quatre Bras to Brussels, and they had been told of Wellington's victory over Ney, but they were unable to understand why the British troops were retreating towards the capital.

The reason was this : Wellington, having driven off the French, remained during the night of the 16th June at Quatre Bras, awaiting news of the result of Napoleon's attack on the Prussians at Ligny, and intending, if all had gone well, to assume the offensive next day. Early on the morrow, however, he learned that the Prussians had suffered defeat, and had been forced to retreat. Discomfiting as this news must have been, Wellington still did not despair of a brilliant victory ; for he was informed that the Prussians, though driven from the field, were bearing their defeat with unparalleled heroism. Marshal Blücher had decided that nothing should deter him from adhering to the original plan ; and in place of falling back on the main dépôt at Maestricht, he directed the withdrawal of his army on Wavre, in order that he should be able to join hands with

Wellington again. Aware of these facts, the British commander ordered an immediate retirement towards Brussels, at the same time sending a message to Blücher, telling him that he would halt and fight on the position about Mont St. Jean, if the Prussian Marshal would bring 25,000 men to his support. This the latter unhesitatingly agreed to do ; and by nightfall of the 17th, the British were practically occupying the position which Wellington had selected, while the cavalry of the rearguard was preventing the enemy from pressing forward too rapidly. Nor was the safety of the right flank neglected ; for, in order to deny the Mons-Hal road to the French, a force of 18,000 Dutch-Belgian troops was posted at Hal. So, on the morning of the 18th June, three solid forces stood out in front of Brussels prepared to bar Napoleon's way from the south, viz. :—at Hal, the above-named body of men ; about Mont St. Jean, Wellington's army of some 68,000 ; and at Wavre, twelve miles to the east, Blücher's Prussians.

But the fight was long in beginning, and those about to take part in it had leisure to gaze on the extraordinary scene which lay before them. Then were they able to see the exact state of affairs—two great armies drawn up, and facing each other, at a distance of barely three-quarters of a mile. Between the hostile armies was situated a shallow valley, some two or three miles in length, and averaging half a mile in breadth ; the sides sloping gently, but being in all parts uneven and undulating. The general direction of the valley was east and west, and Wellington's army occupied the northern crest, slightly in advance of the village of Mont St. Jean ; while the French were in position on the southern crest. From south to north, and dividing each position into almost equal halves, ran the great paved causeway from Charleroi to Brussels. Such was the field whereon was fought the memorable BATTLE OF WATERLOO, so named from the village a little in the rear of Mont St. Jean ; and within that cramped area there were at one time engaged no fewer than 180,000 combatants.

BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

(18th June, 1815.)

At twenty minutes past eleven a single shot was fired across the valley, as if to announce the opening of the fight. Then the French guns, directing their aim at Wellington and his staff, who were reconnoitring in front, set to work with a will, and though fortunately missing their target, as unfortunately dropped some shot into the ranks of the 52nd, killing 2 men and wounding another 15. The Regiment was now ordered to move two hundred yards or so to the rear, when, taking post in the second line, almost on the extreme right of the British, it remained halted a little down the reverse slope, with the other regiments of Adam's Brigade, until the afternoon. An occasional shot fell amongst the men lying on the ground, and caused a few casualties ; but, otherwise, for the time being, they were merely listeners to the din of battle, without even the satisfaction of seeing what was going on.

Meanwhile much was happening. Wellington and Napoleon—the two greatest commanders of the age—were trying conclusions on the field of battle for the first time ; for although the armies of England and France had been fighting against each other for many years, Napoleon himself had been occupied the whole time in directing the operations of his other armies elsewhere in Europe. Now at last he found himself pitted against the man whose reputation he knew only too well, and he gloried in the thought of defeating his great opponent. He refused to be hurried, and the rain of the previous night had made the ground so heavy that the march of his troops had been considerably delayed. It was, therefore, almost midday before he was prepared to launch his attack ; and his enemy had profited by the time allowed him to perfect his own arrangements.

Wellington had taken up a position in two lines, with advanced posts at Hougoumont, La Haie Sainte, Papelotte, and La Haie ; while, in his rear, between the position and

Brussels, lay the forest of Soignies. Had all the troops been British, he would have had little difficulty in placing them on the field of battle, but he had in his army whole brigades and regiments of Dutch and Belgians, of whose qualities as soldiers he was ignorant, and some of whom he suspected of being half-hearted in the cause. Under these circumstances, he deemed it advisable to distribute the allies among the British brigades, or to place them in such positions as to ensure that even if they withdrew from the field, their loss would not be irreparable. One thing he knew for certain: that he could rely on Blücher to bring his splendid Prussians to his support during the day.

From left to right the Allied troops were disposed as follows:—Vivian's and Vandeleur's British Cavalry on the extreme left of the main line, then two Hanoverian brigades of infantry, and then Picton's British division, with its right resting on the Charleroi-Brussels road. On the right, or west, of the road, was Alten's division of Germans and Hanoverians; next, Halkett's British brigade, and then Cooke's British division, consisting of Maitland's and Byng's brigades of Guards. In this manner was the main line drawn up along the Wavre-Nivelles road, facing south, and with the artillery distributed at intervals all along it. A little in advance of this line were three separate detached posts: on the left, the group of villages Smohain—La Haie—Papelotte, held by Dutch-Belgian troops; in the centre, La Haie Sainte, occupied by King's Germans, supported by Dutch-Belgians and three companies of the 95th Rifles; while, on the right, in front of the Guards' brigades, stood the important post composed of the Château and enclosures of Hougoumont, held by four companies of British Guards, a battalion of the Nassau regiment, a company of Hanoverian riflemen, and 100 men of Kielmansegge's Hanoverian brigade.

Aware that Blücher was coming from the direction of Wavre, and that consequently his left could be in little danger, Wellington massed the bulk of the remainder of his troops in the rear of his right, between the villages of

Mont St. Jean and Braine la Leud, while the cavalry was also kept, in second line, down the northern slope of the ridge and out of the enemy's sight.

Across the valley, Napoleon marshalled his army in grand array, forming them in two lines of infantry, two lines of heavy cavalry, columns of both arms as a reserve in rear of the centre, and, lastly, the Grand Reserve of the Imperial Guard, massed in columns, further in rear of the centre. He had at his command a total of 72,000 men, thus outnumbering Wellington's force by some 5,000; and he was able to bring into action 246 guns against his opponent's 156. With him were the tried veterans of many campaigns, and the great marshals and generals who had commanded them in various parts of Europe—Ney, Soult, Reille, Kellerman, and others. Small wonder that he thought, as he rode along the lines and received the joyous cheers of his men, that victory was within his grasp. He felt confident of success; for, in whatever direction he should determine to attack, or at whatever point he himself should be attacked, his arrangements ensured that ample supports and reserves would be thrown into the fight. Moreover, he knew that the Belgian regiments, at the first sign of French success, would waver, and would probably leave the field; but he did not know that his adversary was behind the scenes, and, in order to guard against disloyalty, had carefully distributed the doubtful Belgians amongst troops whose reliability was certain.

Before noon the battle had begun, Napoleon pushing forward his brother, Prince Jerome, against Hougoumont, which was firmly held by the Allies. At the same time, an artillery duel commenced all along the line, and a tempest of shot and shell raged across the valley; but the defenders of Hougoumont, reinforced by the whole of Byng's British Guards, resisted every onslaught of the French columns, even though parties of the enemy established themselves close up to the buildings, and set them on fire. Throughout the day, the attacks on this vital point continued unabated, and so numerous were the assailants that they

were able to overlap it, when pushing beyond the outer flank, they attacked the right of the Allies' main line.

While this was in progress, Napoleon was busy making preparations for his grand assault, intended to break the left centre of the British position. For this great effort seventy-four guns were moved up, so as to bring their fire to bear, at a range of less than half a mile, on the Allies ; and Marshal Ney was placed in command of eighteen thousand men, in four columns, supported by Kellerman's cavalry division. Napoleon hoped that this combined attack would be final and decisive ; that, having captured La Haie Sainte, the columns would be able to sweep onwards to Mont St. Jean, cut off Wellington from Brussels as well as from the Prussians coming from the direction of Wavre, and thus make victory complete. At 1 p.m. Ney's masses of column moved down into the valley, and passed the seventy-four guns, which immediately opened fire over their heads, and caused havoc in the ranks of the Allies. Three of the columns pressed forward against the British centre, while the third moved away north-east, with the intention of driving in the left flank. Whether by design or by accident, Ney's principal attack was directed against the portion of the French line held by Bylandt's brigade of Dutch and Belgians, and no sooner did the French skirmishers, covering the advance of the columns, begin to make use of their muskets than panic seized their adversaries, who turned and fled in disorder. Then was Wellington's forethought, as well as the wisdom of his dispositions, apparent ; for Picton's British division stood close in rear, and ready to fill the gap caused by the disgraceful flight of the Dutch-Belgian brigade.

Although barely recovered from the effects of their recent fighting at Quatre Bras, Picton's three thousand gallant men responded to the call, and advanced in two thin lines to meet the twelve thousand Frenchmen, already flushed with victory. Nearer the columns approached, and the British line halted to receive them. Then, when within a few yards, Ney ordered his columns to deploy into line ; and

Picton saw his opportunity, and instantly seized it. "A volley," he shouted, "and then charge!" and the soldiers required no second bidding. Scarcely thirty yards separated the combatants, and the volley, discharged at so close a range, swept away the head of the leading column, and produced dire confusion. Nor were the French given time to recover; for, headed by Picton, and with a deafening roar, the whole division dashed in with the bayonet, and threw the columns into disorder. Picton was shot dead as he led the impetuous infantry charge, but his splendid leadership had saved the situation, and it fell to the lot of Somerset's and Ponsonby's brigades of heavy cavalry to complete the overthrow of the French in this part of the field. Seeing that the moment for action had come, Lord Uxbridge, in command of the British cavalry in rear of the centre of the line, launched his two brigades on the advancing hosts. Placing himself at the head of Somerset's brigade of Household Cavalry, he led the charge against Kellerman's stalwart Cuirassiers, supporting the French columns; while, at the same instant, Ponsonby's Union Brigade (Royals, Scots Greys, and Inniskillings) thundered down, more to the left, upon the already-disorganised infantry. Neither Kellerman nor Uxbridge would give way, and the shock of the encounter of their two great masses was terrific. Clad alike in polished steel, and mounted on huge horses, these men, all giants of strength, were worthy opponents, and so they proved themselves in the fierce hand-to-hand struggle which immediately commenced. Each man fought for himself and for his life, and no one could say whether, in that desperate fight, Frenchman or Englishman displayed the greater courage. Yet, before long the Cuirassiers were forced to give way, and the Household brigade followed close in pursuit.

Ponsonby's charge met with equal success, and, though their gallant leader was killed, the men of the Union Brigade rode knee to knee at the French columns of infantry, hewing a way into their midst, and cutting up whole regiments. Two French Eagles were taken, as well

as 2,000 prisoners ; and not content with this, the victorious horsemen pushed on, charged Ney's seventy-four guns, and put both the gunners and the horses to the sword, thus placing the guns out of action for the remainder of the day. But the fiery spirits of the horsemen bore them into danger ; in their wild enthusiasm, they had lost the power of rallying ; and in another minute a whirlwind of French lancers burst upon them, and made them pay the penalty of their rashness. The success of the Frenchmen, however, was short-lived ; for they, in their turn, were ridden into by Vandeleur's light horse, and put to the rout.

So far, Napoleon had failed to effect his purpose. His cavalry had been repulsed ; his artillery had been partially destroyed ; and his solid columns of infantry had been thrown into disorder. These calamities had taken place before his very eyes, and he saw also that his troops, though still pushing the assault with unremitting valour, were unable to make headway against the defenders of Hougoumont. Yet, the great Frenchman faced these misfortunes with calmness, and determined to return to the attack. He ordered every available gun into action, and commenced to pound the British line from a distance. For a long while the heavy cannonade continued, and caused great destruction ; but Napoleon soon saw that shot and shell alone would not open the road to Brussels.

At 3.30 p.m. began another phase of the battle, when Wellington's right wing was assailed by squadron after squadron of Cuirassiers, fresh bodies of infantry moving at the same time against La Haie Sainte and Hougoumont. The charges of the cavalry were magnificent, but the squares in which Wellington had formed his troops, resisted all the enemy's efforts to break them. The British guns also stood firm, firing grape at the charging horsemen, until they arrived within forty yards, when, discharging a salvo, the gunners quitted their guns, and fell back to the shelter of the infantry squares. Four times did the French cavalry charge home, using some 12,000 men for the purpose ; yet were they able to do no more than to ride round and

between the squares, which, being arranged chequerwise, met them with bristling bayonets and a withering musketry fire in all directions, throwing them into confusion and forcing them to withdraw.

To assist in the repulse of these charges, Adam's Brigade had been brought to the front, and before long the three regiments were wheeled up to the left, so as to close the gap between Hougoumont and Maitland's Brigade of Guards in the main position. The 71st square was on the right, close to Hougoumont ; then came the 52nd, formed in two squares ; and, on the left, the 95th Rifles. In this situation they obtained a magnificent view of all that was going on, and witnessed the charge of the British cavalry which finally dispersed the Cuirassiers ; but for the succeeding two hours they were subjected to a galling fire from the French guns on the opposite ridge. This was a trying ordeal for the younger soldiers who had never been under fire before, but the example set by the tried veterans of the Peninsula drove all fear from their minds. There they stood rigid and unmoved, although an incessant roar of round-shot and shell passed over them, and occasionally ploughed wide gaps in the squares.

The greater part of Napoleon's famous heavy cavalry was now *hors de combat*, and had effected little, except that perhaps their frequent charges had helped Donzelot's infantry to gain a footing in the vicinity of La Haie Sainte. Between six and seven o'clock, Donzelot pressed the assault, and, although the defenders resisted until they had exhausted their ammunition, the Frenchmen captured the post, and were thus enabled to establish themselves, preparatory to a further attack, close up to the British position. And Napoleon realised that if that attack was to be of any avail, it must be made forthwith, since he was aware that the Prussians from Wavre were already approaching his right flank.

At this time the regiments of Adam's Brigade were ordered back into reserve, and as they withdrew up the slope they became a target for all the French guns, which

fired with such accuracy as to cause many casualties. Each shot did its work of destruction in the squares, and men dropped right and left, with limbs and bodies mangled in the most horrible manner ; but the survivors closed up and continued to march steadily on, until they presently reached the shelter of the reverse slope of the hill. There they were tolerably safe, as the majority of the shot passed over their heads, and they had time to recover from the effects of the terrible cannonade to which they had been subjected. But they knew that what they had suffered was nothing compared with the experiences of some of the other brigades which had stood all day in the front line ; and they knew also that the fight was not yet decided. If the soldiers themselves were slow to understand the nature of the great struggle, their officers felt that the few moments of respite now accorded to them was but the calm before the storm.

Between seven and eight o'clock, Napoleon made his final attempt to retrieve the fortunes of the day. Donzelot's skirmishers, in the vicinity of La Haie Sainte, maintained an incessant musketry fire upon the British gunners in their front, and prevented them from fighting their guns. Presently, French guns were brought up to La Haie Sainte ; and, at a range of less than a hundred yards, poured grape into the ranks of the Allies, who, however, although decimated by each fearful discharge, stood firm until reinforcements reached them.

The roar of battle was now at its height. Wellington, observing that matters had reached a crisis, brought his own personal influence to bear on the situation, galloping from one part of the field to the other, encouraging his men with cheery words, and leading up reinforcements to points where the greatest danger threatened. No less energetic was Napoleon himself, who up till this time had remained seated at a table on a slight eminence near La Belle Alliance, surveying the battle and issuing his orders with unruffled calmness. But the climax was approaching ; the Prussians were pressing his right flank ; and there was no time to be lost. The great Frenchman mounted his white charger, and

determined to make a bid for victory. His Grand Reserve—his veterans of the Old Guard, still remained at hand, fresh, and ready for a supreme effort, and Napoleon decided that they should make that effort. Placing Ney in command of the two massive columns of infantry, he ordered them to take a line between La Haie Sainte and Hougoumont, and assail the position. As his beloved veterans passed him, on the way to the front, he sat on his horse with outstretched arm pointing to the spot which they were to attack, and the cheers which came from the old soldiers convinced him that if it were possible, at this juncture, for any troops to break down Wellington's defences, then his Imperial Guard would do it.

Down the slope in front of La Belle Alliance, into the shallow valley, marched these 10,000 warriors, headed by the drummers, beating the *pas de charge*. Then, as they began to ascend towards the British position, they pushed forward a cloud of skirmishers, who joining hands with those of Donzelot, opened a heavy fire. The two columns, advancing to the attack in close order, were now seen to be heading straight for that part of the line held by Maitland's Brigade of Guards. By this time Adam's Brigade had been moved up into the front line, and stood on Maitland's right, the 3rd Battalion 95th Rifles joining on to the Guards, the 52nd in the centre, and the 71st on the right of the line, filling in the gap between the main position and the northern enclosure of Hougoumont, still occupied by the Nassau troops and Byng's Brigade of Guards.

Barely four hundred yards separated the head of the leading French column from the British position, when Sir John Colborne, commanding the 52nd, swiftly realised the situation. Acting on his own initiative, he gave the order to his Regiment to advance in quick time towards the attacking columns; and as the 52nd moved forward in one long line, the men met the Frenchmen's cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" with three defiant and lusty cheers. All day had they strained at the leash; they saw now that the moment had arrived for them to be let slip; and they

cheered with a heartiness begotten of impatience, no less than of anger at the losses which they had suffered. In perfect order these gallant men moved to their front until Colborne thundered out the command "Right Shoulders Forward," when the whole line wheeled up and faced the flank of the French columns. At the same moment one company of the regiment dashed out to cover the front with skirmishers, who immediately opened fire on the Imperial Guard. The Frenchmen, thus challenged, halted and replied.

Pushing on, across the front of Maitland's Brigade of Guards, the 52nd soon reached the shelter of a low hill, where Colborne gave his men a few seconds' breathing space. The ranks closed up; the bugles rang out; and with one mighty roar from the Regiment, eight hundred British bayonets bore down on the veterans of France. But the latter did not stand to receive the charge; panic seized the foremost ranks; the leading battalions broke and fled to the rear, and in their flight carried with them the whole of the Imperial Guard—the flower of the French army, and Napoleon's last hope. Thus, single-handed, had Colborne and his splendid regiment given the finishing stroke to Wellington's hard fought victory—a victory which, up to the moment of that last, decisive charge, seemed to hang in the balance.

In this magnificent rush, rapid though it was, many were struck down, and Colonel Colborne and his senior major, Rowan, both had their horses shot under them, and were forced to follow the Regiment on foot. But even yet the battle was not over.

The 52nd continued to pour their fire into the disorganized enemy, while Maitland's Guards and the other regiments of Adam's Brigade increased the discomfiture of the Frenchmen by opening fire on them from their positions on the higher ground. Soon, Wellington, who had been an eye-witness of all that had occurred, ordered a general advance, and the whole British army, headed by the 52nd at the double, swept forward towards La Belle Alliance,

where Napoleon and Ney could be seen rallying their men for a last stand. Wellington, with the light of victory in his eyes, rode close in rear of the 52nd, cheering them forward, though they needed little encouragement ; and when, as the sun fast approached the horizon, Blücher's Prussians could be seen moving in rapidly from the east, the French knew that the squares in which they had formed themselves would be powerless to stem the tide of the advancing hosts.

Napoleon, still resolute, refused to acknowledge himself beaten, and enjoined on his soldiers to stand firm, and, if necessary, die by his side on the field. But his generals, who were with him within one of the squares, saw that all hope had gone, and begged him to make good his escape while there was yet time. Then, as the squares gave way and melted into the great mass of fugitives pressing south, Soult and the others carried their Emperor with them—away from his last field of battle.

The pursuit did not slacken for an instant, and Wellington led on his victorious troops as far as Rossomme, when, assured that the Prussians were following on the heels of the flying Frenchmen, he drew rein, and in the moonlight rode back towards Waterloo. Not far away he met Marshal Blücher ; and, amidst the cheers of those around them, the two great warriors gripped hands, as they congratulated each other on the brilliant result of the battle. Then it was arranged that the Prussians should continue the pursuit, while the British army, worn out by nine hours' hard fighting, bivouacked on the actual battlefield.

The 52nd, having outstripped the remainder of the troops, halted for the night at Rossomme, and no one was sorry to hear the order to pile arms and lie down, though, after the recent stirring events, sleep was long in coming. In the distance could be heard occasional shots, the rumbling of wheels, and the clatter of horses, as the Prussians followed up the enemy, and kept him on the move. In the bivouac the sergeants of the 52nd called the rolls of their companies, in order to discover their losses, which were found to be heavy. One sergeant and

36 rank and file were killed, and ten sergeants and 150 rank and file were wounded; while of the officers, Ensign NETTLES was killed with the King's Colour in his hand, and amongst the wounded were Majors C. Rowan and J. F. Love, Captain Diggle, and Lieutenants Winterbottom, Dawson, Anderson, Campbell and Cottingham. But these losses were a very small fraction of the total casualties in the Allied army, amounting as they did to some 14,000 killed and wounded. To what extent the French suffered was never known for certain, though of the 72,000 who invaded Belgium not 42,000 re-crossed the frontier, and of their two hundred and forty guns two hundred and thirteen were left on Belgian soil.

The 43rd, as previously mentioned, did not reach England from the unfortunate expedition to New Orleans in sufficient time to be present at the battle of Waterloo. Landing at Dover on the 1st June, the Regiment received strong drafts from the 2nd Battalion, and on the 16th June, mustering 1,100 bayonets, embarked for the Netherlands. Landing at Ostend, they reached Ghent on the 19th, when they received the news of the great victory, and learned, to their bitter disappointment, that they were a few hours too late to participate in it. Lord Fitzroy Somerset, who was on Wellington's staff, used to relate an incident pointing to the fact that his chief remembered the regiments upon which he knew that he could rely in times of supreme danger. "During the battle," said Lord Fitzroy, "when a particular part of the line was hard pressed, the Duke called out sharply, '*Send the 43rd there!*' I informed him that they were not in the Army, and once and again, nevertheless, at critical moments, his mind intent on the danger alone, and oblivious of the answer he had received, the Duke exclaimed, '*Send the 43rd there!*'"

To return to the 52nd: The night of the battle was spent in bivouac close to the farm of Rossomme, about three quarters of a mile to the south of La Belle Alliance, and the soldiers of the Regiment had the satisfaction of resting their weary limbs upon the straw, which on the

previous night had formed the beds of the French Imperial Guard. On the morning of the 19th, they started on the march to the south, bivouacking that night at Nivelles, and on the following night near Binck. Continuing the march on the French capital, the 52nd obtained their first view of Paris on the 1st July, and two days later crossed the Seine, with orders to proceed to the bridge of Neuilly.

The defeated French army had been pressed continuously by the pursuing Prussians, and had been given little opportunity of showing any organized resistance. Napoleon made desperate efforts to induce his generals to collect their scattered corps with a view to making a stand outside the capital, and for a time it seemed likely that some attempt would be made to defend the city. The appearance of the enemy's skirmishers at a little distance, and the firing of a few warning shots, made it necessary for the Allies to advance with caution. The 52nd, on arriving at the Neuilly bridge, found it held in force, but Sir John Colborne, with cool determination took out his watch and gave the French commander five minutes within which to withdraw, and all further resistance melted away.

Napoleon was still in Paris, hoping against hope that something might yet be done to retrieve his fallen fortunes. But when he became aware that his troops were evacuating the capital, he realized that he was crushed beyond recovery, and he was persuaded to attempt to escape to Rochfort, and there take passage in a French frigate to America. It was, however, too late; for British ships had already closed the exit from the harbour, and within a few days, the great man surrendered to Captain Maitland of the "Bellerophon," in which ship he was conveyed to England. A month later, he commenced his last voyage—sailing in the "Northumberland" for St. Helena on the 8th August.

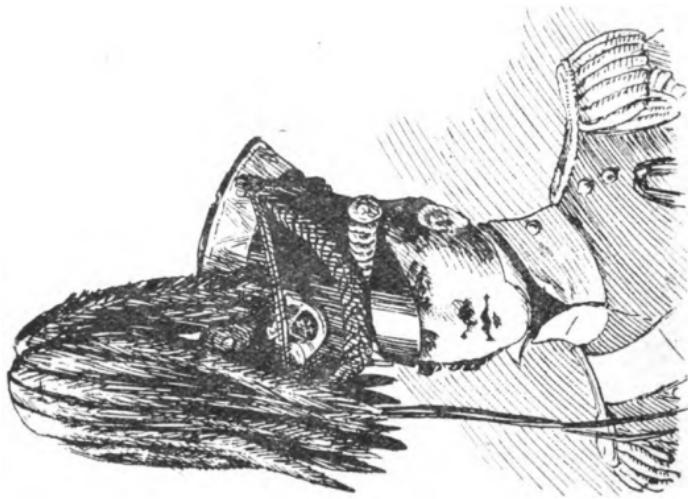
OCCUPATION OF PARIS.

In the meanwhile the people of Paris accepted the inevitable; the National Guard preserved order in the

city, and relieved the regular troops at the various posts, on the departure of the latter from the capital ; while the allied armies encamped in the Bois de Boulogne. On the 7th July, from all the British troops, Adam's Brigade was selected for the honour of entering Paris, and that occasion lived in the memories of the officers and men of the 52nd for the remainder of their days. It was a proud moment, when with band and bugles playing, they marched down the centre of the road leading through the Champs Elysées, to the Place Louis Quinze and the Tuileries. They had taken part in probably the most decisive battle of the age, and now, within three weeks, they were marching in triumph, into the enemy's capital, with orders to occupy it until such time as the Bourbon king should be restored to the throne, and the country should have settled down.

In the Champs Elysées the 52nd, together with the 71st and 95th, and a troop of the Cossacks of the Don, encamped until the 2nd November, when they moved to Versailles, and, three weeks later, to St. Germains, where they spent Christmas Day. The 43rd also spent their Christmas in Paris, having just taken up their quarters in the barracks in the Place Verte.

43RD OFFICER.



1826.

52ND OFFICER.



CHAPTER XIV.

CAMPAIGNS OF THE FIFTIES.

Kaffir War (South Africa) 1851—1853; Indian Mutiny Campaign, 1857—1858.

DURING the years 1816, 1817, and the greater part of 1818, both the 43rd and 52nd formed part of the Army of Occupation of France, frequently changing quarters, and occupying various towns and villages. In the autumn of 1818, the two Regiments were in the neighbourhood of Valenciennes, where, on the 23rd October, was held probably the finest review of the armies of all nations that ever took place in Europe, the Duke of Wellington being in command, and the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia being among the many distinguished personages present. The Regiments then returned to England, and rested on their laurels for upwards of thirty years, during which period the 43rd twice proceeded on active service, though on each occasion as a precaution against possible hostilities, which did not come to a head. In 1827, the Regiment was sent from Gibraltar to Lisbon, to safeguard Portugal against the threatening attitude of Spain, and, for several months, moved from one place to another, visiting the scenes of the campaigns of 1810 and 1811. In 1837, the Regiment was quartered in New Brunswick when the Canadian Revolt broke out, and was despatched in the depth of winter, across country, to Quebec. In sleighs, and with the assistance of boats and canoes, the Regiment crossed the Portage of the Madawaska under the most trying circumstances, accomplishing a journey of 370



43RD PRIVATE, 1832.

really envied."

THE KAFFIR WAR.

1851—1853.

From the earliest years of the nineteenth century, the British colonists at the Cape had suffered at the hands of the Kaffir tribes on the frontier, and punitive expeditions were frequent. The Kaffirs naturally objected to the inroads of the white man, and made counter-inroads, but, as time went on, they found themselves gradually pushed back, until, by 1850 the British boundary had advanced, north-eastward, as far as the Kei river. This new territory was

miles — principally over snow and ice, in eighteen days, with only a few casualties from frost bites. The timely arrival of the 43rd in Quebec practically put an end to the revolt, and when the circumstances of this remarkable forced march were made known to the Duke of Wellington, he expressed the opinion that "it was one of the greatest feats ever performed, and the only military achievement by a British officer that he



43RD OFFICER, 1832.

called British Kaffraria, and extended on the coast from the Keiskamma river to the Kei, and inland to the Amatola mountains. It was a small tract of country—roughly speaking only some eighty miles by fifty, but it was difficult for military operations, by reason of the density of the bush and the broken nature of the ground among the foothills of the Amatolas.

In the autumn of 1850, it was found necessary to depose the Kaffir chief, Sandile; and, on Christmas Eve, a British patrol, despatched to the Amatolas, was ambuscaded at the Boomah Pass. An arduous campaign followed and lasted for two years, necessitating the despatch of reinforcements from England. Amongst them was the 43rd, which sailed from Cork on the 12th October, 1851, and landed at East London (between the mouths of the Keiskama and the Kei) on the 17th December, when they were inspected and cordially welcomed by the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Harry Smith, who for so many years had served as a Brigade-Major in the Light Division during the Peninsular War.

The operations which the 43rd found in progress were of a most uninteresting description, though they were replete with all the hardships and disagreeables of ordinary warfare. The Regiment was at first split up into small columns, for the purpose of escorting provisions to the garrisons of the fortified posts which had been established in the interior, raiding cattle, and destroying crops, the idea being to bring the Kaffirs to submission by depriving them of the necessities of life. The enemy seldom appeared in the open, but occasionally fired on the troops from the bush, being particularly cunning in arranging ambushes in the narrow passes among the mountains. In this manner many detachments were taken unawares and suffered severely. In January 1852, a company of the 43rd was proceeding to King William's Town for provisions, when, on entering the pass at Bailey's Grave during the night march, it was suddenly fired upon from the bush on both sides. Several casualties occurred, and while SURGEON DAVIDSON of the

43rd was attending to the wounded he was shot dead, the party only being extricated from its perilous situation by the timely arrival of a detachment of mounted troops.

THE WRECK OF THE "BIRKENHEAD."

Reinforcing drafts for various regiments in South Africa were despatched from England in the "Birkenhead" early in January, 1852, the 43rd having on board a draft of 41 men, under the command of LIEUTENANT GIRARDOT. Altogether, there were on the ship, including the crew, 638 men, women, and children, and on the night of the 26th February, when within a few miles of her destination, the unfortunate vessel, going at full speed, suddenly struck a rock, off Danger Point, between Simon's Bay and East London. The captain endeavoured to back her off, but with the result that the water immediately rushed into the hole in the bows, and many of the men sleeping below were drowned before being able to reach the deck. The ship at once began to break up, and it was then that the great power of discipline showed itself. The deck was thronged with officers, soldiers, women, and children, but from first to last there was not the slightest disorder. Every command that was given was obeyed implicitly; Lieutenant Girardot and a party of men were sent below to work the chain-pumps, in the hope that the rush of water might be kept down until the boats could be lowered, and the pumps were vainly worked while the vessel rapidly sank. At the same time the horses were pushed overboard, and given a chance of swimming ashore; the cutter was lowered, and all the women and children placed in it; and then the ship broke in half, the forepart instantly disappearing, while the stern, crowded with the survivors, remained afloat for a few minutes longer. Even at that moment there was no murmur, and no attempt on the part of a single man to leave the ship. The most perfect discipline prevailed, and the soldiers carried out any orders given to them.

In the meanwhile, the other ships' boats had been

lowered, and were standing off about a hundred yards from the wreck, and when the captain saw that nothing could save his ship, he called out to all on board to save themselves by jumping overboard and making for the boats. Fortunately, however, Captain Wright (of the 91st) and Lieutenant Girardot were close at hand, and, observing that the cutter with the women and children had not yet got away, they implored the men not to listen to the captain's suggestion. All seemed to understand what it meant: that with a struggling mass of humanity in the water, the cutter must inevitably be swamped, and all stood firm on the deck till the cutter had got clear away, and the last of the vessel went down, leaving only a portion of the masts out of the water.

An immense number of men were sucked down with the sinking ship; some few clung to the masts, hoping to be eventually picked up; while the others battled with the waves, and, aided by the floating pieces of wood from the wreck, attempted to make their way to the shore. Amongst the latter was Lieutenant Girardot, who was a strong swimmer, and who managed to dive clear of the ship as she went down. On coming to the surface, he could see no trace of land, and after swimming for some time, he found that he was going in the wrong direction, so turning back he came again within sight of the masts of the wreck. Somewhat exhausted, he rested by floating on his back, and divested himself of his shoes and jacket; then he struck out for the masts which were still crowded with men, but finding that there was no room for him there, he contrived to support himself on some of the wreckage floating around, until as the day broke, he saw land in the distance. Endeavouring in vain to persuade the refugees on the masts to accompany him to shore, he was fortunate enough to find a cabin door floating near him, and with the aid of this placed under his chest, he travelled slowly towards the land.

The sun soon became intensely hot, and Girardot had to plunge his head constantly under water, to ward off

sunstroke. Then, as he drew nearer to the shore, he became aware of the dangers ahead of him ; the surf was breaking mountain-high against the precipitous rocks ; he could see men being dashed to pieces ; he could see others, imprisoned in the tangled mass of seaweed, being buffeted about by the waves ; and the cries of the unfortunate swimmers overtaken by the sharks were ever in his ears. Avoiding the rocks, he found himself drifting towards a small creek, and there he discovered a few other men as fortunate as himself. He had been ten hours in the water and was well-nigh exhausted, yet at that moment he turned back and assisted more exhausted men to shore, and in this way saved several lives.

After a while, seeing no prospect of picking up others, Lieutenant Girardot, with Cornet Bond (of the 12th Lancers) and some fourteen rescued soldiers, mostly without clothes, made their way inland, and after a toilsome march of twelve miles in the heat of the day reached an English colonist's farm, where they were most hospitably received. On the following day, on visiting the shore in the vicinity of the wreck, Girardot fell in with other survivors, and escorted them to the shelter of the farm, where they all remained until a ship was sent to convey the shipwrecked party back to Simon's Bay. Of the 638 persons on board the ill-fated troopship 454 perished ; all the women and children were saved ; and of the 43rd party Lieutenant Girardot and 14 men reached the shore alive.

When the circumstances attending the loss of so many men became known in England, all marvelled at the soldiers' heroism ; all admired their discipline ; and Napier, then penning the introduction to his " Battles and Sieges in the Peninsula," concluded it with the following words :— " For the soldiers it is no measure of their fortitude and endurance ; it records only their active courage. But what they were, their successors now are—witness the wreck of the ' Birkenhead,' where four hundred men, at the call of their heroic officers, Captain Wright and Lieutenant Girardot, calmly, and without a murmur, accepted death

in a horrible form rather than endanger the women and children already saved in the boats. The records of the world furnish no parallel to this self-devotion!" The loss of the "Birkenhead" became the subject of paintings by well-known artists, and the discipline of the soldiers was considered so magnificent that the King of Prussia ordered the account of the wreck to be read at the head of every regiment of the Prussian army.

BUSH FIGHTING.

At the end of February, 1852, the headquarters of the 43rd were at King William's Town, but early in March the Regiment went out on patrol, and from the 9th to the 15th was occupied in clearing the Kaffirs out of the country in the neighbourhood of Fuller's Hoek and Hermann's Kloof. The work was of the most arduous and hazardous description, the network of mountains and valleys being clothed with almost impenetrable bush, and studded with rocks. The Kaffirs, who knew every inch of this difficult country, watched their opportunities, and harassed such small parties of the troops as they saw that they could take at a disadvantage. In this way, at Fuller's Hoek, they killed LIEUTENANT THE HON. H. WROTTESLEY, and wounded two men; and again, on the 7th April, in the attack on Anta's Hole, at the foot of Mount MacThomas, CAPTAIN O. A. GORE was shot at the head of his company.

Soon after this the South African winter set in, and operations were suspended, the troops hutting themselves, and enjoying a well-earned rest until October, when the 43rd joined Colonel Eyre's column, ordered to scour the Amatolas, in search of the Kaffir Chief Sandile. Little resulted from this expedition, and in November three companies of the Regiment proceeded with Sir George Cathcart's expedition against the Basutos, whose Chief, Moshesh, had offended.

Passing Fort Hare on the 8th November and Eland's Post on the 12th, the troops entered the country colonized

by the Dutch Boers, and were received with every mark of friendship. Burghersdorp was reached on the 28th November, and, on the 2nd December, the Orange river was crossed. Two days later the force encamped on the bank of the Caledon river, when the Basuto chief was called on to come in and pay the fine which had been imposed upon him. This he hesitated to do, and after giving him an ample allowance of time, the General determined to cross the river, and attack the enemy's stronghold on the 20th December. Basutoland was accordingly invaded, and the Basutos at once opened fire on their assailants, which brought on the action of BEREA, in which Lieutenant the Hon. A. Annesley and six men of the 43rd were wounded. The day's fighting was not of any great interest, but towards nightfall the Basutos made a determined onslaught, which was, however, quickly repulsed, and on the following morning the Chief submitted. A week later, the expeditionary force left the country, and the companies of the 43rd returned to headquarters at Keiskamma's Hoek.

During the opening months of 1853, occasional patrols were sent out, to round up the enemy's cattle, or to clear small parties of rebel Kaffirs out of the bush, and on the 16th March the war was brought to a close by the conclusion of peace. There had been no great fight to cheer the men's spirits, and everyone's endurance was constantly strained almost to breaking point. The soldiers suffered from the climate and from exposure, and on one occasion the 43rd camp was struck by lightning. The total casualties in the Regiment were as follows:—killed, 3 officers and 5 men; died of disease, 38 men; lost in the "Birkenhead," 28 men; wounded, 1 officer and 14 men.

THE INDIAN MUTINY CAMPAIGN.

1857—1858.

In 1854 both the 43rd and the 52nd were in India, the former being stationed in the Madras Presidency, the latter in Bengal. For the 43rd the next three years were un-

eventful, and for the 52nd they were almost equally so, except that, in 1856, the Regiment formed part of the Field Force which carried out the unresisted annexation of the hitherto independent kingdom of Oudh.

The spring of 1857 found the 52nd established in barracks at Sealkote, but hardly had they settled down than they received the news of the mutiny of the native troops at Meerut and Delhi, and rumours of disaffection among other native regiments soon became current. Still, the British officers belonging to most of the native regiments were so confident in the loyalty of the men of their individual corps that few precautions were taken against the possibility of a widespread revolt; but that such had been carefully planned was proved by subsequent events. The first intimation of the outbreak at Delhi reached Sealkote on the 13th May, and though an eye was kept on the three native regiments in the station, they continued to perform their duties under arms, as usual.

The discontent among the troops of the native army was said to have arisen with the introduction of a new form of cartridge issued with the Enfield musket. The cartridges were greased, and before ramming them down the muzzle, it was necessary to bite off the end, in order to release the powder. The sepoys were persuaded either by ignorant people, or by sedition-mongers, that the grease used for the cartridges was obtained from the fat of both pigs and cows, and that the British authorities thus offered a gratuitous insult to the people of India, by forcing the native soldiers (Mahomedans and Hindoos) to soil their lips with the fat of animals which they considered to be unclean. Whether that was the initial cause of the Sepoy revolt, or whether there was some deeper religious or racial antagonism at work, undoubtedly the "greased cartridge" ultimately became the sole cause of the mutiny of a great many regiments.

On the 25th May, the 52nd marched out of Sealkote for Wuzeerabad, to form part of the Movable Column, under the command of Brigadier Neville Chamberlain. The

Regimental women and children had been previously sent to Lahore for safety, and all the heavy baggage, stores, etc., were left at Sealkote, under a guard of the 46th Native Infantry. On the 27th May, Wuzeerabad was reached, and the column then proceeded to Lahore, where it arrived on the 2nd June, half the 52nd going into barracks at Mean Meer, and the other half being quartered in Lahore. At this time the European troops with the column consisted only of the 52nd and the Artillery, who were outnumbered by the native cavalry and infantry brigaded with them, but the loyalty of the native regiments was not then doubted. On the 8th June, the column marched for Umritzar, and after remaining there two days, proceeded to Jallundar (22nd June), and Phillour (25th June). Information was then received that the 35th Native Infantry, forming part of the column, intended to desert and join the mutineers at Delhi. They were, therefore, quietly surrounded by the 52nd and Royal Artillery, and ordered to lay down their arms; and on the same day the 33rd Native Infantry marched into camp and were similarly disarmed. The mutiny was now spreading like wild-fire through the native army, and the movable column was marched about the country, in order to keep the presence of European troops before the eyes of the natives. On the 5th July the 52nd arrived again at Umritzar, and three days later disarmed the 59th Native Infantry. Next day came news of the revolt of the native troops left behind at Sealkote, and the further news that they had pillaged the station, making away with the 52nd regimental stores, as well as all the officers' mess plate and other property. Among these mutineers was a wing of the 9th Native Cavalry, the other wing being with the movable column, and the sowars of the latter were immediately ordered to surrender their arms and give up their horses.

Every effort was now made to prevent the Sealkote mutineers from reaching Delhi, since they were in possession of arms, ammunition, and a quantity of stores, and would form a valuable reinforcement to the main body of mutineers,

who had already proclaimed the old king of Delhi Emperor of Hindostan. On the 10th July, the 52nd, starting at night, marched almost continuously to Goordasepore, a distance of forty-two miles, which was reached at 4 p.m. on the 11th. It was then learned that the Sealkote mutineers were some fifteen miles off, on the far side of the Ravee river, and Colonel Campbell appealed to the men to do their utmost "to come in contact with these treacherous and murdering scoundrels." It was a repetition of the march to Talavera, and as the 52nd had then shown their ability to forget fatigue, so they did now. Early on the following morning, the men pressed forward, and after marching some ten miles, arrived within sight of the river Ravee, when the enemy were discovered, drawn up in perfect order, at a spot known as TRIMOO GHĀT, with colours flying, and the sepoy clothed in British uniform, looted at Sealkote. The column at once formed up for attack, the guns being up in the front line, with the 52nd extended between them, and, before any advance was made, the mutineers commenced the fight with a heavy discharge of musketry. The British guns acknowledged the salute with a shower of grape, and the 52nd poured in a withering fire from their rifles. Then the mutineers showed that they meant business, and that they had learned their trade only too well. Their cavalry, possibly under the influence of *bhang*, charged on the flanks and rear, with the most reckless courage, and forced the 52nd companies to throw themselves into rallying squares; while, at the same moment, a portion of their infantry essayed the capture of one of the guns. The fight was, for some minutes, a desperate hand-to-hand one, but the mutineers suffered for their rashness, the cavalry being practically wiped out, and the infantry falling in numbers before the 52nd bayonets. The guns and rifles now reopened their fire, and the main body of the enemy beat a retreat across the river, in good order and covered by a rearguard, which was, however, annihilated in its retirement. Something like a panic then set in, several of the sepoy being drowned in crossing the river, and others throwing

down their arms and running away. But the bulk of the enemy withdrew, with one piece of artillery, to an island in the river.

In this action there were engaged on the British side 9 guns, 280 of the 52nd, and 120 Sikhs; while the mutineers had in the field some 800 infantry and 300 cavalry. Of the 52nd, 5 men were killed, 4 died of apoplexy, and 2 officers and 16 men were wounded. Of the enemy upwards of 200 dead bodies were found on the field.

It remained to dispose of the mutineers who had established themselves on the island, and on the 16th July, the 52nd procured two boats, in which the men were ferried across the river by detachments. When all had landed on the island, the Regiment formed for attack, and although the mutineers succeeded in firing two rounds of grape from their guns, the gunners were immediately bayoneted by Captain C. K. Crosse's company, which charged home and captured the gun. The enemy did not await a further onslaught; the courage of the sepoys gave way; and they fled in disorder towards the river, being hotly pursued by the 52nd. Thus the rout of the Sealkote mutineers was complete, and few escaped, since nearly all those who eluded the bullets of the 52nd were drowned in attempting to cross the river. In this satisfactory engagement the 52nd had only four men wounded, and the salutary manner in which they had dealt with this body of mutineers was an immense factor in checking the rebellion in the Punjab.

After this, the Regiment returned to Umritzar, and on the 23rd left that place to join the force besieging Delhi. It must be remembered that, in those days, no railways were available for the movement of troops in India, and the cross-country marches were full of difficulties, the roads being bad, and the rivers unbridged. Yet, so eager were the British troops to come to close quarters with the mutineers, whose ruthless murders and barbarous outrages had placed them beyond the pale of humanity, that they undertook continuous forced marches with light hearts, and, on the 14th August, the 52nd, mustering 680 bayonets, joined the camp before Delhi.

SIEGE AND ASSAULT OF DELHI.

Delhi had been invested some time before the arrival of the 52nd, and since the mutineers were known to possess an ample supply of ammunition both for the guns of the fortress and for their small arms, there appeared to be little hope of their surrendering themselves. Moreover, they were well aware of the fact that the Government was in no merciful mood, and that the troops surrounding them would see the matter through to the bitter end. They made no attempt, therefore, to come to terms, but sullenly fired on the batteries thrown up in front of the place, and endeavoured to pick off such men of the outposts as approached within range of the walls. The 52nd formed part of the 2nd Brigade, and furnished strong pickets between the camp and the city ; during the first week a few officers and men were wounded ; and on the 22nd August the Regiment was attacked by a foe whose powers of dealing death were far weightier than those possessed by all the rebels in Delhi. An epidemic of cholera swept through the camp, and a severe form of fever commenced its ravages. Many men died and a great number of others were placed *hors de combat*, so that within a month of the arrival of the Regiment before Delhi, its fighting strength had fallen to 240 of all ranks.

In the meanwhile the batteries had been hard at work, endeavouring to breach the wall between the Water and Cashmere Bastions, and late on the 13th September the breaches were reported practicable. Orders for the assault were immediately issued, and Colonel G. Campbell, of the 52nd, was placed in command of the 3rd Column (consisting of the 52nd Light Infantry, 1st Punjab Infantry, and the Kumaon Battalion) with instructions to storm the Cashmere Gate, push on into the city, and occupy the Jumma Musjid—the great Mohammedan mosque.

The 52nd paraded at 3 a.m., 14th September, but the advance was delayed for some time, and it was not until after daybreak that they reached a spot close to Ludlow

Castle. Thence the distance to the Cashmere Gate was some 500 yards, by a straight and broad road. The 60th Rifles covered the advance, and close behind came the storming party of the 52nd—fifty men, under Captain J. A. Bayley; in rear again followed the supports, consisting of fifty men from each battalion of the 3rd Column, commanded by Captain C. K. Crosse; and lastly, at a little distance away, came the main body of the Column. The road leading to the Gate was cut through the glacis, beyond which lay the ditch in front of the high embattled walls. The 60th rapidly extended along the glacis, and lying down opened a heavy fire upon the defenders, now manning the wall above and on each side of the Gate; while shot and shell were poured into the city by the guns and mortars of the English batteries. The bridge in front of the Gate had been destroyed by the defenders, but planks were quickly placed across the ditch, and a party of Royal Engineers (2 officers and 3 sergeants) with powder bags, dashed forward, for the purpose of blowing in the Gate. With the party was BUGLER HAWTHORN, of the 52nd, whose instructions were to sound the Regimental Call as soon as the explosion was known to have been successful.

The musketry fire from the walls was now terrific, and four out of the five Engineers were immediately struck down, two of the sergeants being killed outright, and Lieutenant Salkeld being mortally wounded. There remained only Lieutenant Home and Bugler Hawthorn, but a minute later the small door in the gates was blown in, and Hawthorn, standing coolly by, sounded the Regimental Call, until he saw the stormers rushing forward. As a matter of fact, the rattle of musketry from the walls drowned the sounds of the bugle, and the stormers advanced on seeing the flare of the explosion.

Captain Bayley was knocked over by a shot through the arm as he led the assault, and his place was immediately taken by Captain Crosse, who was bringing on his supports. Outstripping the men, Crosse led the way over the planks,



OFFICER, 43RD LIGHT INFANTRY.
Kaffir War.

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and closely followed by Corporal William Taylor, was the first to enter the Cashmere Gate. There it was found that the explosion had done its work well, the gate having been shattered and the defenders blown up. No time was lost ; the Regiment formed up rapidly inside the gate, and proceeded forthwith to clear the ramparts, and advance into the heart of the city. The street fighting soon became severe, as the mutineers made desperate efforts to retrieve the fortunes of the day, firing from the houses on all sides, and occasionally sending parties of cavalry to charge the column. In one street they brought a gun into action, and endeavoured to fire grape, but LIEUTENANT BRADSHAW, of the 52nd, gallantly led a charge against it, and put it out of action, though unfortunately at the cost of his life. Many gallant actions were witnessed during these hours of heavy fighting, and many more went probably unrecorded. Bradshaw himself had fought splendidly throughout the advance, and early in the day had had a personal encounter with a rebel, whose head he cut off with one blow of his sword.

In spite of the firing, the Regiment crossed the Chandee Choke (the main street of Delhi), and pushed on to within fifty yards of the Jumma Musjid. There they were checked, as the enemy had retreated into the massive building in great numbers, while other mutineers lined the houses all around. The 52nd was now practically alone, as the native troops belonging to the column had mostly gone off on their own account, to loot the houses. There were no explosives at hand wherewith to blow in the massive gates of the Musjid, and it was therefore impossible to storm the stronghold. The enemy's fire increased each moment ; so, failing to obtain the supports for which he had sent, Colonel Campbell withdrew his force, across the Chandee Choke under a heavy fire of grape and musketry, to the Begum's Bagh, where he held the gateway facing the Chandee Choke. From that position, however, the troops were presently forced to retire, since the enemy soon took advantage of the high roof tops to bring an overwhelming

musketry fire to bear on the defenders of the Bagh, who were themselves unable to see anything at which to fire. The next stand was made at the Church, which was reached at about 1 p.m., and which was held throughout the remainder of the day and the following night.

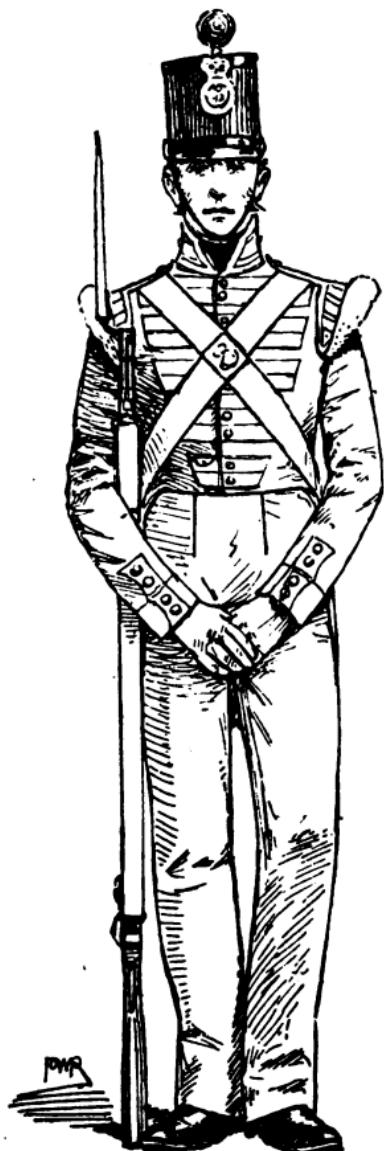
The casualties in the 52nd on this day amounted to four officers and eighty non-commissioned officers and men killed and wounded—just one-third of the numbers engaged; while the whole force lost in killed and wounded sixty-two officers and upwards of a thousand men, out of a total of some four thousand. That the troops fought magnificently and that they did their utmost are facts beyond dispute, and that they were unable to complete the capture of Delhi all at once was due to a combination of unforeseen circumstances. In the first place, the mutineers offered an unexpected amount of resistance, fighting stubbornly from street to street and from house to house; secondly, the extent of the place had been misjudged, and the labyrinth of streets and lanes forgotten; and lastly, the abilities of the force available had been overestimated; for, of the 4,000 men launched against Delhi, barely 1,800 were Europeans, and the loyal natives, splendid fighting men though they were, were difficult to restrain from breaking away in search of plunder.

While Colonel Campbell's Column had been thus fighting its way into Delhi, the three other columns had assaulted with equal success, and had established themselves within the walls. The 1st Column, commanded by the intrepid Nicholson, carried all before it as far as the Kabul Gate, but beyond that point it was found impossible to penetrate, without reinforcements. These had been promised in the shape of a fifth column, which had been ordered to first capture the rebel battery at Kishengunj, outside the fortress, and then join Nicholson. The attack on the battery failed, and Nicholson was thus left in the lurch, finding himself opposed by vast numbers of the enemy. Nothing daunted, he attempted to cleave a way through to the other columns in the city, but in doing so he received

his death-wound. Little more was done after this, and when night came on, the troops threw out strong pickets, and held the various portions of Delhi which they had won.

Much work remained to be done, and from the 15th to the 20th September, the street fighting continued almost without intermission. House by house, the troops cleared the streets, until, in the end, the mutineers who survived had quitted the place, and dispersed over the neighbouring country. Many of the fugitives were subsequently brought in by the peasants, eager for the promised rewards, and handed over to justice ; for it was no war against the people of India, the majority of whom up till this time stood loyally by the Government.

After the capture of Delhi, the 52nd was not again engaged with the enemy. On the 5th October the Regiment marched towards the Punjab, and arrived at Jullundur on the 5th November, remaining there until March, 1858, when it returned to its original quarters at Sealkote. During its absence of ten months it had suffered heavy losses. Two officers and 33 men had been killed ; two officers and upwards of 100 men had died of disease ; while the wounded numbered five officers and 108 men. How many others were invalidated from the effects of the hardships and privations of the campaign is not recorded. On the other hand, the Regiment had added to its laurels considerably ; on all occasions its discipline was acknowledged to have been of a high order, its marching powers magnificent, and its behaviour in action beyond all praise. Several of the officers were mentioned in despatches, and received special promotion and other rewards ; SERGEANT-MAJOR STREETS was promoted to an Ensigncy in the 75th Regiment "for gallant conduct up to the time that he was severely wounded" ; and CORPORAL WILLIAM TAYLOR, who was mentioned "for conspicuous gallantry throughout the operations," would doubtless have been suitably rewarded, had he not unfortunately succumbed to an attack of dysentery a few days after the fall of Delhi. But the highest distinction won by individuals of the Regiment was the VICTORIA CROSS, which



PRIVATE, 43RD LIGHT INFANTRY.
Kaffir War.

was conferred upon BUGLER HAWTHORN, and upon LANCE-CORPORAL HENRY SMITH, "for distinguished valour and bravery in action before the enemy during the assault on the fortress of Delhi, on the 14th September, 1857."

The General Order announcing these awards named first the Royal Engineers who formed the explosion party at the Cashmere Gate, and then described the gallant actions of the two men of the 52nd :—

BUGLER ROBERT HAWTHORN, Her Majesty's 52nd Regiment, who accompanied the above explosion party, and not only most bravely performed the dangerous duty on which he was employed, but previously attached himself to Lieutenant Salkeld of the Royal Engineers, when dangerously wounded, bound up his wounds under a heavy musketry fire, and had him removed without further injury.

No. 2764, LANCE-CORPORAL HENRY SMITH, Her Majesty's 52nd Light Infantry, who most gallantly carried away a wounded comrade under a heavy fire of grape and musketry, in the Chandee Choke of the City of Delhi, on the morning of the assault, the 14th September, 1857.

THE 43RD IN THE INDIAN MUTINY.

During the early months of the Mutiny the 43rd quartered in Madras and Bangalore, was held in readiness to check any spread of the revolt to Southern India, but it was not until September, 1857, that they were called upon. In that month the 8th Native Cavalry mutinied at Vellore, and three companies of the 43rd were employed, with other troops, in disarming them. No serious disaffection among the Madras troops appearing after this, the services of the 43rd were called for, to assist in quelling the outbreak in the north of India ; and, on the 24th December, the Regiment paraded at Bangalore, to commence the march to join Brigadier-General Whitlock's Column in the Saugur District. With Lieut.-Colonel J. M. Primrose in command, and mustering thirty officers and 969 men—all seasoned soldiers, the 43rd, in brigade with the 19th Madras Infantry, started for



From the painting by Colonel E. A. P. Hobday, Royal Artillery.

CASHMERE GATE, DELHI.

Bugler Robert Hawthorn winning the Victoria Cross, 14th September, 1857.

Kamptee, a distance of upwards of 630 miles. Kamptee was reached on the 28th March, and another 160 miles brought the Regiment to Jubbulpore on the 17th April. The weather was now getting hot, but Whitlock's Column was still many miles away, and was not caught up until the 27th May, when the 43rd marched into Banda. The Rajah of Banda, who had been in league with the mutineers, had already been brought to his senses by General Whitlock ; and immediately after the arrival of the Regiment, the Column marched against Kirwee, whose Rajah had also been proclaimed a rebel.

On the approach of the troops, Rajah Narrain Rao forthwith surrendered, and his palace was guarded by a company of the 43rd, who had the satisfaction of superintending the removal of his vast accumulation of treasure. More than twenty cart loads of gold bricks, money, jewels, and other valuables were taken away—forfeited as prize of war, and the Rajah himself was subsequently transported to the Andaman Islands. As was customary before the days of special field service allowances, all this treasure was eventually sold for the benefit of the troops engaged. The sales, which realized more than half a million of money, took some years to complete, and it was not until 1867 that the final distribution was made. Then everyone, from the General downwards, received a share according to rank, the share of a sergeant of the 43rd being £100, and that of a private £50.

The following month was spent in marching about the country in search of rebels, with whom occasional skirmishes took place, and on the 7th July the Regiment arrived at Calpee, having made an almost continuous march of thirteen hundred miles since the previous Christmas Day. The march was remarkable in many ways : for three months the heat was intense ; the men were dressed in ordinary cloth uniform, and wore a linen covering on their forage-caps ; the route followed was for the most part along rough country tracks, in places mountainous and rocky ; numerous wide rivers had to be crossed without bridges or boats ; and the

transport consisted of a long line of slow-moving bullock carts, necessitating the assistance of strong fatigue parties to get them out of difficulties. During the cooler months there were few casualties, but later the men suffered considerably from sunstroke and other diseases resulting from fatigue and exposure. Altogether three officers and forty-four men died up to the time of the arrival of the Regiment at Calpee, and many more remained in hospital for several weeks afterwards.

From Calpee detachments were sent out in various directions, and small parties were kept busy in breaking up bands of rebels wherever they appeared. There was seldom any heavy fighting, as the enemy had begun to realize the hopelessness of attempting to make a stand against the European troops. In August two companies of the 43rd captured Jalaun fort; in September another two companies had a brush with the rebels at Sahao and at the Punghatten Pass; and towards the end of the year there were one or two smart engagements—at the Scinde river, at Kirwee, and at Purwarree. But by this time the back of the mutiny had been broken; most of the native chiefs who had sided with the mutineers had been captured; and it remained only to bring to book the few rebellious rajahs and their followers who were still at large.

During almost the whole of 1859, the 43rd was employed in marching about the country, principally in the Saugur district, and driving the bands of rebels from pillar to post. In January a subaltern's party had some sharp skirmishes in the Punnah Jungle, when PRIVATE HENRY ADDISON, of the 43rd, won the VICTORIA CROSS, for gallant conduct in rescuing Captain Osborne, Political Agent at Rewah, who had been worsted in a personal combat with a rebel sepoy. Addison was severely wounded (leg amputated). In the same month a company was engaged at Bagowra, but after this rebel parties were seldom met with, and the country began to settle down. The hot months were spent about Banda, Kirwee, and Nagode, but from August to November most of the companies of the Regiment were in the field

again. On the 14th August, two companies assisted in routing the notorious Ferozeshah, while subsequently the rebel villages of Patouri, Raisham, and Gopalpore were attacked at different times.

The part played by the 43rd in the Indian Mutiny Campaign was not an exciting one. For two years they were almost continuously on the march, but they seldom had the satisfaction of a hard fight. The work allotted to them was, however, of a most important nature, and by their exertions an immense tract of country was kept under control, so that the rebels from other parts were unable to use it as an asylum. No men of the Regiment were killed in action, and only a few were wounded, but the casualties from disease were by no means light.

For their services in the suppression of the Indian Mutiny the 52nd were permitted to add DELHI to the battle honours on their Colours, and those present were awarded the Indian Mutiny Medal with the "Delhi" clasp; the 43rd also received the Medal.

CHAPTER XV.

SMALL WARS, 1863—1898.

*New Zealand War. Moplah Riots. Detachments in the
Sudan and Burma. North-west Frontier of India
Campaign.*

NEW ZEALAND WAR, 1863—1866.

WHEN the unrest in Central India had subsided, the 43rd received orders to return to Madras, and, early in January 1860, the Regiment marched to Calcutta, proceeding thence by sea to Madras, where quarters were occupied for some eighteen months. By the spring of 1862 the 43rd was back again in Calcutta, and various detachments were furnished to outlying stations until September, 1863, when the Regiment was ordered to embark for active service in New Zealand.

New Zealand had been recognized as a British possession by the Treaty of Peace of 1814, but no great attention was paid to it for another quarter of a century, though British trading companies and missionaries established themselves in the country. Until about 1860 the aborigines, the Maoris, lived on friendly terms with the colonists, but then disputes about the sale of land began to arise, and some of the chiefs rebelled against the Government, which was now firmly established. The local militia and volunteers held the rebels in check for some time, but no headway was made against the insurrection until the arrival of British troops. The Maoris were then defeated, and in March, 1861, peace was proclaimed, the natives settling down, as loyal subjects, for the next two years. In May, 1863, how-

ever, something appeared to offend some of the tribes, who broke out into open rebellion, for the suppression of which the 43rd was despatched to reinforce the troops already on the spot.

The Regiment, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel H. J. P. Booth, embarked at Calcutta on the 8th October; but, owing to want of ballast, the ship had to proceed to Mauritius, and did not reach Auckland (New Zealand) until the 11th December, when it was found that a big fight had already taken place at Rangiriri. On disembarking, the 43rd marched to Otahuha, whence several detachments proceeded out into the district; but the Maoris were not encountered until the end of April of the following year (1864). On the 21st of that month the rebels laid an ambuscade at a little distance from Fort Maketu, and nearly succeeded in entrapping Major F. M. Colvile, in command of the detachment. He and his companions, however, contrived to escape to the Fort, and a strong party was immediately despatched to clear the Maoris away. This proved no easy task, for the enemy gathered in considerable numbers on the opposite bank of the neighbouring river, and defied the troops. For several hours desultory firing went on across the river, and at nightfall the 43rd party withdrew to the Fort, with the loss of three men killed. Reinforcements were now asked for, and another company of the 43rd was sent down from Tauranga, while, at the same time two men-of-war from that place co-operated from the coast. In the meanwhile the Maoris had become bold, and at dawn of the 27th April opened a heavy fire on the Fort, but in a short space of time were shelled out of their position, and forced to withdraw. The ships followed them along the coast, and a party on land soon put them to the rout.

At the same time, a strong party of the enemy had been busy elsewhere, and had thrown up a fortified post some five miles from Tauranga before the British General realized what was being done. This redoubt was known as the GATE PAH (from the fact that it was built at a large gate

in the fence separating Mission land from Maori territory), and the enemy had displayed considerable skill in erecting it. It stood on the summit of a ridge whose slopes descended on either side into swampy land, and between the side faces of the redoubt and the swamps a line of rifle pits had been dug, while the whole work was further strengthened by an elaborate arrangement of obstacles in the form of palisades and stout fencing. As soon as General Cameron became aware of the strength of the force occupying this post, and its dangerous proximity to the British post at Tauranga, he decided to destroy it and disperse the rebels. For this purpose, he brought reinforcements of various regiments and a Naval Brigade, and on the 27th April marched out of Tauranga towards the redoubt, bivouacking that night within some twelve hundred yards of it. Under cover of darkness, the 68th Light Infantry were marched round to a position from which it was hoped that they would be able to cut off the enemy's retreat.

On the following morning the artillery shelled the Pah vigorously, but it was afterwards discovered that the fire of the guns did little real damage to the earthworks. At 4 p.m. a breach having been made in the palisades, orders were issued for the assault. A flying column of mixed troops covered the advance, then came Lieut.-Colonel Booth, in command of the assaulting column, consisting of 150 of the 43rd and 150 of the Naval Brigade, and in rear followed the reserve—about 300 sailors and 43rd.

As soon as the flying column had gained a position from which they could keep down the fire from the rifle pits, Colonel Booth's storming party charged forward, and entered the breach with few casualties. The enemy fled out at the rear of the work, but only to be met by a hot fire from the 68th, and driven back into the Pah. Finding their retreat thus cut off, all the fighting spirit of their race rose up in them, and the Maories dashed into the fray, determined to sell their lives dearly. A desperate struggle at close quarters ensued, and almost instantaneously the small

British force was overwhelmed. Nearly every officer of the column was shot down, and the men suffered severely from the withering fire which came upon them from all sides, until, unable to withstand it longer, the survivors sought refuge behind the nearest cover outside the redoubt, where they waited for the reserves. The General, however, deemed it too late to renew the assault that night, but promised the men that they should have an opportunity of revenging the death of their comrades at daylight. A line of entrenchments was thrown up about a hundred yards from the Pah, and another company of the 43rd joined the bivouac from Tauranga during the night ; but at daybreak it was discovered that the redoubt had been evacuated, the defenders having succeeded in escaping, in silence, through the lines of the 68th, during the darkest hours of the night.

The total casualties in this disastrous affair amounted to 15 officers and 105 men, of whom 4 officers and 40 men belonged to the Naval Brigade, and 11 officers and 36 men to the 43rd. COLONEL H. J. P. BOOTH was one of the first to fall, but he was found to be still alive when the Pah was entered next morning, and with his last breath apologized to the General for being unable to carry out his orders. CAPTAINS R. C. GLOVER, MURE, HAMILTON, and UTTERTON, LIEUTENANTS F. G. E. GLOVER, and ENSIGN LANGLANDS were killed ; while Ensigns Nicholl and W. Clark were severely wounded.

Many gallant deeds were done in the short struggle inside the redoubt, and great efforts were made to rally the men who had become unnerved at seeing so many of their officers shot down in front of them. LIEUTENANT and ADJUTANT GEORGE GARLAND, a man who had served in all ranks of the 43rd, was conspicuous for his efforts to retrieve the fortunes of the day, and was subsequently rewarded by promotion to Captain ; while a near relative of his, SERGEANT W. B. GARLAND earned the Medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field, and an annuity of £15 a year.

It is only fair to the Maories to say that they were as

humane as they were brave, respecting the bodies of their dead enemies, and giving water to the wounded during the night.

The next engagement in which a detachment of the 43rd took part was at Te Ranga, four or five miles from the Gate Pah. Here the enemy had formed a chain of rifle pits, and had commenced to throw up a redoubt similar to the Gate Pah, and on the 21st June a mixed force of some 500 men left Tauranga, for the purpose of dispersing the Maories. With the force were 10 officers and 230 men of the 43rd, and the engagement took the form of a bayonet charge at the 600 of the enemy holding the rifle pits. They stood the charge without flinching, and fought most fiercely, until eventually they were completely routed, and dispersed into the deep ravines in the neighbourhood. Nearly seventy of the enemy were killed in the pits and another forty outside; while, considering the desperate resistance met with, the loss to the assailants was not heavy. Of the detachment of the 43rd, 5 men were killed, and Captains F. A. Smith and H. J. Berners and 14 men were wounded.

It was in the assault on the rifle pits that **CAPTAIN F. A. SMITH** won his **VICTORIA CROSS** "for conspicuous gallantry in being first into the right of the line of rifle pits." Major Synge, commanding the skirmishers, had his horse shot under him in two places, and several other officers of the Regiment, as well as Sergeant-Major Daniels, were mentioned in despatches for their coolness and courage under the heavy fire brought to bear upon them during the charge.

During the following twelve months there was little fighting, the 43rd being employed for the most part in marching about the country and destroying fortified villages. On the 28th July, 1865, Captain Close, commanding a patrol of some 50 men of the Regiment, marched out of Warea, but almost immediately fell in a Maori ambush, and encountered a heavy fire. **CAPTAIN CLOSE** himself and a soldier by his side were killed by the first volley, but the situation was saved by Ensign O'Brien, who promptly ordered his men to fix bayonets and charge, when the enemy

at once made off into the bush. After this, attempts were made to bring the Warea rebels to book, but with little result, until, in October, Brevet Lieut.-Colonel Colvile, with a Company of the 43rd, laid an ambush for them, and succeeded in drawing on about fifty of the enemy. This, however, did not prove a great success, as the Maories fled at the first fire opened upon them, though not before they contrived to kill a sergeant and a private, and severely wound Lieut.-Colonel Colvile and Sergeant Dyer.

The war was now practically at an end; a few more villages were destroyed during the first two months of 1866, and towards the end of March of that year, the 43rd sailed for England, which was reached in July.

The Regiment had been absent from England for nearly fifteen years, during which time it had taken part in campaigns in South Africa, India, and New Zealand. Only for four years of the fifteen had it been in settled quarters, and throughout its long periods of active service it had never been engaged as a complete battalion. Sixteen officers and one hundred and fifty men had been killed in action or had died of disease, and six officers and some seventy men had been wounded. Yet the Regiment had won two "Battle Honours" for its Colours, as well as two Victoria Crosses; and many of its officers and men had gained special promotion as well as distinctive decorations and rewards.

DETACHMENT SERVICES IN INDIA, SUDAN, AND BURMA.

For upwards of thirty years neither the 43rd nor the 52nd was fortunate enough to take part in any of the Campaigns or Expeditions in which the British army was engaged, although many men whose colour service had been with the 43rd and 52nd came out as reservists in 1882 and fought with other regiments in Egypt, and several officers of the Regiment served on the staff in the Egyptian and other campaigns. It fell to the lot, however, of detachments of the 43rd and 52nd, to fight on more than one occasion. Twice, during the tour of Indian service of 1872

—1887, companies of the 43rd, quartered in Southern India, were called out in aid of the Civil Power, to quell riots among the Moplahs, and on each occasion the duty was of a strenuous nature. The Moplahs belong to a small fanatical tribe, and whenever they have given trouble, they have refused quarter and have sold their lives dearly. In June 1873, Captain G. F. Vesey's Company of the 43rd, on detachment at Malliapoorum, was called out to assist in the capture of a band of ten Moplahs who had committed murder, and shutting themselves up in a house, defied the police. The company surrounded the house, but the Moplahs refused to surrender, and shortly afterwards rushed out and attacked the troops with spears and swords, cutting down three men before their charge was stopped by a volley. The second affair with the same tribe took place in December 1884, when Captain Curtis's Company was on detachment at Malliapoorum. The Moplahs had now armed themselves with firearms, and had fortified themselves in a strongly-built temple, from which they kept up a brisk fire on the troops as they advanced. The latter then took cover round the temple and opened fire on the loopholes, while Lieutenant C. R. Day, in command of the advanced party proceeded to reconnoitre the gateways, with a view to an assault. He was almost immediately shot through the chest, but was able to withdraw to his men and place the sergeant in command before having his wound attended to. Soon afterwards, as darkness was setting in, an attempt was made to break in one of the temple doors with an axe, but it proved too solid, and nothing remained but to guard the exits from the temple during the night. The withdrawal of the remainder of the troops was the occasion for heavy firing from the loopholes, but a reinforcement of twenty-five men, under Lieutenant F. G. Cardew, coming up at this moment, assisted in keeping down the fire, not however before that officer had his helmet knocked off by a bullet.

The night passed quietly, and before daybreak next morning a careful reconnaissance was made of the building,

when it was decided to bring matters to a head by blowing in the gateway with dynamite. Further reinforcements and dynamite were sent for, and at 7.30 a.m. a detachment of fifty-four men of the Royal Fusiliers arrived. After the troops had taken up their positions, PRIVATE BARRETT, of the 43rd, passing through the fire-swept courtyard, placed a dynamite charge against the west door. The fuse went out; but undeterred by the fire from the loopholes, he placed a second charge, and blew in the door.

A little later, a similar act of gallantry was performed by PRIVATE ROLPHS, of the Royal Fusiliers, and PRIVATE MILES, of the 43rd, who placed charges against the eastern doorway. Here again the fuse failed, and Private Miles was shot dead through the head while preparing another. Rolphs, however, returned to the gateway and blew it in.

For their services on this occasion, Privates Barrett and Rolphs were subsequently awarded the Medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field.

The other doorways of the temple were soon afterwards blown down, and while the fire from the loopholes in the upper storey was kept under, an entrance into the building was effected. It was found that the Moplahs had withdrawn to the upper storey, taking the ladder with them, and barring the trap door. This was soon disposed of with a charge of dynamite, and in the room above were found eleven dead bodies and one man seriously wounded. Probably no more gallant twelve ever held a hundred British soldiers at bay for eighteen hours.

Disaffection among the Moplahs continuing for some time after this, three companies of the 43rd (or, as now officially styled, the 1st Oxfordshire Light Infantry) were despatched from Bangalore in February 1885, to reinforce the garrisons on the Malabar coast. But, a month later, the Regiment received orders to concentrate at Bangalore, and proceed to the Afghan Frontier, to form part of a force prepared to check Russian aggression in Afghanistan. The Regiment remained in camp in the neighbourhood of Quetta from the end of April until December, during which

time some eighty men died of cholera. In the meanwhile the Russian scare had blown over, and in March 1886, the 43rd returned to India and was quartered at Poona.

At the end of 1885, Lieutenant F. W. M. D. Scott and 32 N.C.O.'s and men of the 52nd (2nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry) formed a division of a Mounted Infantry Company which took part in the Nile Expedition of the above year, and were present at the action of Ginniss and some minor operations, for which they received the Medal and Khedive's Star.

Again, in 1891, the 2nd Battalion furnished two companies (under the command of Major and Brevet Lieut.-Colonel W. Clark) for the Wunthoo Column, organized for the purpose of pacifying one of the outlying districts of Upper Burma, which had been formally annexed by the British Government some few years earlier. The work of the column took the form of heavy and continuous marching, without encountering resistance; and two months later the troops joined the Manipur Field Force, but too late to see any fighting. For these operations they were awarded the Medal and Clasp.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF INDIA CAMPAIGNS, 1897—1898.

The 2nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel F. H. Plowden, mobilised at Ferozepore, on the 13th August, 1897, for active service, and received orders to join the 2nd Reserve Brigade, at Rawul Pindi. The primary object of the expedition was the punishment of the Afridis, who had captured the forts in the Khaibar Pass; but, before proceeding against them, it was decided to subdue another tribe—the Mohmands—inhabiting the hills to the north of the Kabul river. For this expedition the Regiment was placed in the 2nd Brigade, and marched out of Peshawur on the 10th September, five days later reaching the Mohmand country. Nothing of importance

occurred for some little time, although Sir B. Blood's Division, entering the country from the north, had some heavy fighting. On the 27th September, however, the Regiment was engaged in the neighbourhood of the village of Koda Khel, from which the enemy made off into the neighbouring hills on the approach of the troops. From their sangars on the heights, the tribesmen kept up a brisk fire, until eventually silenced by the mountain guns, and put to the rout by the Gurkhas, who had scaled the hills. The village was then destroyed, and the troops commenced to withdraw, the enemy following for a little distance, but soon desisting.

The following two or three days were spent in destroying villages, the tribesmen contenting themselves with "sniping," and following up for a short distance the troops as they withdrew. But, as they clung to the hills, it was impossible to get to close quarters with them, and the destruction of their villages and fortified towers having been completed, the expedition marched back to Peshawur on the 7th October.

A few days later the Regiment proceeded again on active service with the Peshawur Column of the Tirah Expeditionary Force. The Main Column and the Kuram Movable Column were already operating against the Afridis and Orakzais, and the Peshawur Column was to be used, as required, to co-operate by way of the Bara Valley.

In its advance across the Samana Range, the Main Column had some desperate fighting—notably at Dargai, and on the 21st October the Peshawur Column concentrated at Bara, a short march from Peshawur, hoping to be ordered up the Bara Valley, to join hands with the Main Column. No such order, however, was given, and the "containing force" remained in the vicinity of Bara for several weeks, during which time the troops were employed in making roads, and in safeguarding the passage of stores to the front. The tribesmen in the neighbourhood were hostile, and occasionally fired long-range shots at the working parties, with the usual sniping at night, but always

contriving to evade any parties sent in pursuit of them. This state of affairs continued until the 7th December, when the Peshawur Column was ordered to march through the Gandao Pass to Swaikot, and meet Sir William Lockhart's force, coming down from the Tirah country.

As the Gandao Pass was known to be occupied by Afridis, the Column approached it with great caution, but the enemy offered no resistance, except towards evening when a small party made a raid on the baggage. The next few days were spent at Swaikot, escorting convoys up the Bara Valley, and on the 14th December Lockhart's troops, worn out with marching and fighting, and escorting many sick and wounded, marched into camp, their rearguard being pressed the whole way.

On the 17th December the Peshawur Column advanced to Jamrud Fort, and on the 23rd moved into the Khaibar Pass without opposition. The forts at Ali Musjid and Lundi Kotal, as well as Fort Maude, which had been in the possession of the Afridis for some months, were found to have been stripped and dismantled, but the tribesmen had taken refuge in the hills, and only occasionally showed themselves. The chief duty for the next few weeks consisted in picketing the heights on either side of the valley, to ensure the safe passage of transport, and in destroying the towers and fortified villages which had been abandoned by the enemy on the approach of the troops.

The Afridis were at this time well provided with rifles and ammunition, secured from the captured forts, and they took every opportunity of firing into the piquets from a distance, usually becoming bold towards nightfall, and pressing the rearguard which covered the withdrawal of the piquets. In this way several small skirmishes occurred before the end of the year, though the casualties to the troops were very few. On the 30th December, however, a more serious affair took place. Four companies of the Regiment were detailed to furnish road-piquets, extending some five miles from camp, in order to cover foraging and demolition parties, at work up the valley. By 2.30 p.m. the parties had completed their

work and withdrawn, and an hour later the piquets were ordered to come in. As soon as the further piquet towards Ali Musjid began to move, it became evident that the Afridis intended to harass the retiring troops, and fire was opened from a village (some 600 yards off) which the enemy had re-occupied unperceived. This piquet, which had been joined by another under Lieutenant C. Parr, formed the rearguard, and at once halted and returned the fire; but, as the ground afforded them little shelter, casualties came quickly. Colonel Plowden, Lieutenant R. Owen, Sergeants Gaskin and Horsman and three men were immediately wounded, and Private Butler shot dead. The wounded were attended to under fire, and were then taken back, along the *nullah*, in which the party had sought cover, to a house a short distance in rear. Captain H. R. Davies, whose piquet was in a house a mile further back, on hearing what had occurred in front, pushed forward to the assistance of the rearguard, and succeeded in reaching the *nullah* without casualty. There he found one dead and four wounded men, with Lieutenants Parr and R. M. Feilden and eight sound men. It had been impossible for this small party to carry the dead and wounded, as well as their rifles and accoutrements, and at the same time to reply to the enemy's fire which swept the ground on all sides. This reinforcement, therefore, consisting of 18 men, with Captain Davies and Lieutenant C. H. Frith, was most welcome; and presently a further reinforcement of 16 men was brought up by Lieutenant Carter. The cover provided by the *nullah* was now hardly sufficient for the number of men crowded in it, and the enemy, becoming bold, worked round, and fired into the backs of the men, from a distance of only ten yards.

Captain Davies and the few men near him charged over the bank, and dispersed the enemy, but not before Colour-Sergeant Jones had been shot through the thigh. Almost at the same time, another charge was led by Lieutenants Parr, Carter, and Frith. Lieutenant Parr was shot through the leg when half way up the bank, and Sergeant Hopkins

was killed by a bullet through the head, as he rushed forward to bayonet a man.

It now being nearly dark, and the enemy showing less boldness, Captain Davies decided to retire with the dead and wounded to the house which had been selected in rear. The enemy were still firing, but the house was eventually reached with only one fresh casualty—Private Warner, shot through both thighs. The party was now safe, as the house was placed in a state of defence, a fire lighted, and the wounded made comfortable.

In the meanwhile, Colonel Plowden and the first party of wounded had succeeded in reaching a house still further in rear, and BUGLER CROWHURST obtained the Colonel's permission to ride the three miles into camp, to ask for reinforcements. This he did in the most gallant manner, being exposed to a heavy fire for some considerable distance after starting, but succeeding in delivering his message without being hit. A strong force was at once despatched to the scene of the fight, but the enemy had withdrawn, and by 8 p.m. the dead and wounded were in *dhoolies* and on their way back to camp.

During this harassing fight the men behaved with the greatest coolness and gallantry, staying by their wounded comrades at all risks, and bringing them under cover while exposed to the fiercest fire. Men were shot in the act of assisting the wounded, yet this did not deter others from doing the same thing. Lieutenant L. J. Carter at different times carried four wounded men into the *nullah*, and one of the men was killed while being carried on the officer's back. But many such deeds, performed when all were busily engaged, doubtless passed unnoticed. The Medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field was subsequently awarded to five N.C.O.'s and men, *viz* :—

SERGEANT-MAJOR H. H. DEMPSEY who was dangerously wounded in the spine (and died of his wounds two months later) in assisting to cover the retirement of the rearguard, setting a splendid example of courage and discipline which did much to save the day.

SERGEANT W. J. SMITH formed one of the party covering the withdrawal of the rearguard. He and others were posted in a most exposed position, and Sergeant-Major Dempsey was wounded close to him. He dragged the Sergeant-Major into the *nullah* below, and was himself severely wounded in doing so; but in spite of the wound, he continued to direct the fire of the men near him, until the rearguard had secured its retreat to the house, even then refusing assistance until the other wounded had been attended to.

CORPORAL C. HUNT was assisting Private Betterton, who was wounded, to the rear, when Lance-Corporal Bell who was with him was killed. He got Private Betterton under cover, returned, and picked up the rifles of Lance-Corporal Bell and two men who had been wounded, and then accompanied the Colonel and Lieutenant Owen, both wounded, to the house in rear, when he volunteered to go back to camp, with four others, for assistance.

PRIVATE J. PANTING was sent by the Colonel from the house in which the wounded were lying, to carry orders to the rearguard. He was much exposed to fire on the way, and remained with the rearguard till the end. During the final withdrawal to the house, he and Private Warner were assisting Lance-Corporal Luckett, who was wounded, to reach the house. Private Warner was shot through both thighs, and Private Panting remained with him alone and got him safely in, Lance-Corporal Luckett managing to crawl in by himself.

BUGLER E. CROWHURST, when it had been ascertained that reinforcements could not be called up by signalling, volunteered to ride into camp on the Colonel's pony. He rode alone through three miles of country, one side of which was occupied by the enemy at intervals all along, who fired on him whenever they saw an opportunity.

The casualties during the day were 1 sergeant and 2 men killed; the Sergeant-major wounded (mortally); 3 officers, 4 sergeants, and 6 men wounded, out of a force engaged numbering less than 70 of all ranks.

This was practically the last affair of the campaign, for although an attempt was made to draw the tribesmen out of the hills on the 1st January, 1898, there was no further fighting, but the Regiment was employed, during the next three months, in the demolition of the Khaibar villages, and it remained in occupation of Lundi Kotal until the end of October. Four officers (Lieutenants J. L. POWYS, D. R. NAPIER, H. W. B. TRENCH, and J. G. FITZGERALD) died of disease contracted during the campaign; one Warrant Officer (SERGEANT-MAJOR H. H. DEMPSEY) died of his wounds; 1 sergeant and 2 men were killed in action, and 53 men died of disease. Their names were afterwards inscribed on a monument erected to their memory in New Road, Oxford.

The India General Service Medal (1895), with clasps "Punjab Frontier, 1897—98" and "Tirah, 1897—98" was awarded to those who took part in the campaigns.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1899—1902.

THE Boer War is of such comparatively recent occurrence that it is perhaps unnecessary to enter into the causes in detail. It is sufficient to say that the Boers declared war against Great Britain, and assumed the offensive on the 11th October 1899. On that date the 1st Battalion Oxfordshire Light Infantry was serving at home, and the 2nd Battalion was in India, but the 1st Battalion was unfortunately not of sufficient strength to be despatched with the first reinforcement sent out to South Africa. Moreover, the Regimental Reserve was at the time unable to provide sufficient men to bring the Battalion up to war strength. Later in the year, however, the heavy casualties in South Africa necessitated the despatch of further reinforcements, and the 1st Battalion of the Regiment mobilized, at Aldershot, in December, as part of the 13th Brigade, 6th Division, for immediate embarkation.

Leaving behind four officers and 131 N.C.O.'s and men of the Mounted Infantry Company, to follow later, the Regiment, numbering 660 of all ranks, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Hon. A. E. Dalzell, sailed from Southampton on the 22nd December, and landed at Cape Town on the 14th January 1900. There it received orders to entrain at once and proceed to Naaupoort, in the north of Cape Colony, in order to prevent the Boers from crossing the Orange River.

So far the British force in South Africa had fared badly. No head had been made against the Boers in any direction, and they, on their part, had invaded British territory on all

sides. In Natal, Ladysmith was still besieged, and General Buller, beaten back at Colenso, was attempting to force his way across the Tugela river further to the west. General Gatacre had been worsted at Stormberg. Kimberley was invested by the Boers, whose position at Magersfontein had proved impregnable to Lord Methuen's relief force. And the isolated garrison of Mafeking was still hemmed in. Such, in brief, was the general situation when the Regiment arrived in South Africa. But Lord Roberts, who had just landed, was already formulating his plan of campaign, which, within a few weeks, brought a series of brilliant successes ; and in several of these the Regiment was fortunate enough to participate.

At Naaupoort, the Regiment remained for ten days, and then moved on by rail to Thebus, but only to encamp there for a short time. On the 30th January sudden orders were received to strike camp and entrain. No destination was mentioned, but after a journey of some 250 miles, the Regiment detrained at Modder River. It soon became evident that operations on a large scale were about to take place, but what form they were to take was kept secret until Lord Roberts had actually set his army in motion. Then it gradually became known that it was intended to relieve Kimberley by marching rapidly, well away from the railway, through Orange Free State territory. This movement, wide of the flank of the Boer position about Magersfontein, it was hoped would have the effect of cutting off the enemy from his supply base at Bloemfontein, and thus force him to evacuate Magersfontein. When Kimberley was relieved, and the railway re-opened, Lord Roberts intended to make that place his base for the advance on the Free State capital.

THE INVASION OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE.

Late on the night of the 10th February, the Regiment moved by rail to Enslin, where it halted during the following day, preparatory to the commencement of the great

march. On the 12th, the 6th Division concentrated at Ramdam, thence marching to Waterval Drift on the 13th, and to Wegdraai Drift on the 14th, thus keeping within supporting distance of the Cavalry Division, which was moving ahead. So far the cavalry had met with but slight opposition, and on the 14th had established themselves at Klip and Rondeval Drifts; but that day the Boers appeared in some strength to the north, and it was deemed advisable to bring the 6th Division closer up to the cavalry. The infantry on reaching Wegdraai had already completed a nine hours' march, yet it was necessary that they should make a special effort, and at 5 p.m. the 6th Division was once again in motion. During the night the troops were drenched by heavy storms of rain, which, though disagreeable, cooled the air, and proved a welcome relief to the intense heat. The men marched magnificently, and at 1 a.m., 15th February, arrived at Klip Drift, having covered twenty-seven miles in twenty-three hours.

Up till this time, the main body of the Boer forces under General Cronje still clung to its original position about Magersfontein, the General refusing to believe that Lord Roberts intended to move any distance away from the railway. Now, however, he slowly began to understand that the British were working round his flank and threatening his line of communications with Bloemfontein. But even this fact did not give him much cause for alarm, since his line of communications with the Transvaal was still open, and his subordinates were unable to dissuade him from remaining to bar the way to an advance by the railway from Modder to Kimberley. On the 13th he learned that the British Cavalry had occupied Klip and Rondeval Drifts, and he sent some eight hundred burghers to drive them back. On the night of the 14th, he heard that the 6th Division was marching on Klip Drift, but this he considered to be merely a feint on his flank, to cover the real attack along the railway. Some few hours later, he realized his perilous situation.

On the morning of the 15th, as soon as the 6th Division

had assembled in the neighbourhood of Klip Drift, General French ordered forward the cavalry against the eight hundred burghers in position to the north, defeated them after a brilliant engagement, and then, pushing on with all speed, entered Kimberley at 6 p.m., without further opposition.

During that day, the 6th Division remained inactive; though two companies of the Regiment assisted in dragging two naval guns into position on a kopje, from which the sailors were able to shell the Boers, retiring westward after being defeated by General French.

THE FIGHT AT KLIP KRAAL.

At 3 a.m. on the 16th February, the Regiment paraded with the remainder of the 13th Brigade, under orders to reinforce the outposts and if necessary to support a large force of Mounted Infantry destined for Kimberley. No sooner did the Mounted Infantry move out into the open than they were received by a heavy fire from Boers in position on some kopjes. Such an amount of opposition had not been expected, but it soon became known that Cronje had evacuated his position at Magersfontein, and throughout the night had been in full retreat towards Bloemfontein, by a line passing some two miles north of the British outposts, and that the opposition now met with came from his reargard, which was covering the river-crossing at Klip Kraal Drift.

Major-General Knox, commanding the 13th Brigade, recognized the importance of cutting off the Boers from the drift, and instructed the Mounted Infantry to endeavour to place themselves between the kopje and the river. This, however, proved an impossible task, and Knox decided to attack the kopje forthwith. Keeping the Gloucestershire and West Riding Regiments in reserve, he demonstrated with the Buffs against the front of the position, while the Oxfordshire Light Infantry was ordered to recross to the south (left) bank of the river, work round, cross the river again, and attack the Boers in flank. The Regiment forded

the river with great difficulty, and then, while two companies crept up the river bed, the remainder extended across the open plain, to draw off the attention of the Boers. The enemy immediately opened fire upon them ; but feeling the pressure of two field batteries which had been brought into action, and observing that the other regiments of the brigade were steadily advancing against the front of the position, the rearguard fell back to a second ridge.

This new position faced west and south, the right about a mile from Drieputts Drift, the left resting on Klip Kraal Drift, with Boer skirmishers concealed in the river bed and in neighbouring ravines. It was a position well suited for a rearguard action, and the events which followed proved that Cronje's lieutenant was a master in the art of rearguard tactics. The plan of attack was similar to that adopted against the previous position, the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, supported by the mounted infantry and two batteries, working against the enemy's left flank, while the other regiments assaulted the western face of the right and centre of the position.

Again the Regiment forded the river, and at about noon the second phase of the day's fight began in earnest. So hot was the enemy's fire that progress was slow, and although the guns continuously shelled the position at a range of two thousand yards, the Boer rifles were never silenced. Some of the companies, in the endeavour to turn the flank, pushed into the lower kopjes lying between the river and the main ridge, but the flank attack soon became a frontal attack, and men began to drop rapidly before the enemy's bullets. Meanwhile the West Riding and Gloucestershire Regiments were carrying out their original orders ; and, pressing the attack, had already joined on to the left of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry. But even then little way could be made, and heat and thirst began to tell on the men, who had been under fire for nearly eight hours. The Boers also brought two guns into action against the attacking batteries, whose ammunition was by this time almost exhausted.

By 4 p.m., the engagement was practically over ; the enemy was still unshaken ; and although some companies of the Regiment carried the outlying knolls and arrived within 150 yards of the Boers, the main ridge was seen to be impregnable. The men lay down behind such cover as the ground provided, and small parties were sent back to the river to fill water-bottles, drawing a hail of bullets whenever they crossed an open stretch of ground. When night came on, the troops were ordered to bivouac where they were, and under cover of darkness the Boer rearguard evacuated the position. The casualties in the whole force amounted to upwards of a hundred of all ranks, while the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, who bore the brunt of the fighting, lost 10 men killed, and one officer and thirty-nine men wounded.

PURSUIT OF CRONJE.

So close were the British troops to Klip Kraal Drift that night that Cronje feared to attempt the passage of the river at that point, since his enormous train of wagons required considerable time to effect a crossing. He, therefore, determined to strike across the bend of the Modder and make use of Vendutie Drift, some ten miles higher up. During the night march the more mobile portion of his convoy consisting of two hundred wagons and a mounted escort, crossed the river at Paardeberg Drift, half way to Vendutie, and got clear away to Bloemfontein. The remainder, hampered by the slow-moving oxen, women, children, and dismounted men, wended their way to Wolvekraal, which was reached at 8 a.m. on the 17th February, and where the wagons outspanned preparatory to crossing Vendutie Drift. They, however, waited too long, for as the leading waggons commenced to move they were met by a salvo of British shells, coming from a totally unexpected quarter. The surprise was complete, and Cronje was dumbfounded, as cavalry and horse artillery from Kimberley had succeeded in heading him off.

General French the day before had been informed of the situation, and instructed to move with all speed on Koodoos Drift (above Vendutie). Favoured perhaps by fortune, he arrived in the nick of time, and his horse artillery batteries came into action, at a range of 2,100 yards before the Boers had any idea that British troops were in that direction. But for French's bold and rapid stroke and the magnificent forced march of the cavalry, Cronje in all probability would have been able to cross the river and reach the main road to Bloemfontein before the pursuing infantry could have defeated his rearguard. As it was, the cavalry and artillery pinned him to the ground, and though his officers made strenuous efforts to silence the guns and to outflank the several bodies of cavalry, the Boer General found himself unable to move.

In the meanwhile, early on the morning of the 17th, the infantry took up the pursuit, and at 10 a.m. the Mounted Infantry came in touch with the Boer rearguard, which had been left in position on a hill to the north of Paardeberg Drift. The two brigades of the 6th Division which had become separated on the previous day marched up either bank of the river, and at 1 p.m. were reunited at Brandvallei Drift. There the Division halted until 5 p.m., when the march was resumed and continued for another five hours, the troops then bivouacking some two miles from Paardeberg Drift. In the neighbourhood of this drift also the 9th Division arrived during the night, and a portion of the Mounted Infantry Brigade pushed on towards Koodoos Drift, to join hands with French's cavalry.

Cronje had abandoned all intention of moving, and had formed laager about Vendutie Drift, while his men, working throughout the night, threw up earth cover for the wagons, and dug pits and shelters in the bank of the river, with such skill and energy that, by dawn of the 18th, this hollow had been converted into what was practically an unassailable redoubt. The position was surrounded by kopjes, from which British guns could fire with ease, but the ground about the river was favourable to Boer resistance, in that

there were dongas and patches of bush well situated for occupation as outworks. In these the enemy's riflemen established themselves, and were able to flank the main faces of their entrenched position, though being quite invisible, their presence was unknown to the British until the first assault was delivered.

BATTLE OF PAARDEBERG.

Several considerations induced Lord Kitchener, now in command of the pursuing force, to strike at once. Strong reinforcements were known to be advancing, from Bloemfontein and elsewhere, to Cronje's relief, and their near approach might put heart into the invested Boers, and persuade them to fight their way out. To attack them, therefore, before such eventualities should be realized, and before the defenders of the laager had had time to settle down to the defence, seemed the wisest course to adopt, and before 8 a.m. (18th February) the troops detailed for the assault were on the move. The plan of attack may be briefly described as follows:—

The cavalry to watch the north and prevent the escape of the enemy in that direction. The laager to be assaulted simultaneously on the east by the Mounted Infantry, and on the west by the 9th Division; while the 6th Division held the south, with the 13th Brigade and the Yorkshire Regiment ready to make, against the enemy's works along the river bank, a demonstration, capable of being converted, if necessary, into a real attack.

Up till this time the British soldiers did not know that French's cavalry had headed off the Boers, but as the 6th Division moved forward from their bivouacs, each man saw for himself how matters stood. Cronje's laager lay below them, and French's horse artillery batteries were visible beyond. This happy culmination to the pursuit of a force which they had fancied had already got beyond their reach, gave the men new life; the fatigue of the long and hot marches of the previous days, hunger, and thirst were

forgotten ; and the sole desire of all ranks was now to close with the enemy, and put an end to all further trouble. But the Boers' position was found to be far stronger than had been imagined.

The guns were soon in action, shelling the laager with vigour, and setting many of the wagons on fire. The attacks of the infantry and mounted infantry developed rapidly, and shortly after 8 o'clock, the troops were closing in on the laager from three sides. Without entering into the details of the fight in every direction, we will say that it was discovered that the Boers were not merely defending the actual laager of wagons, but had ensconced themselves in the river bed, in advanced rifle pits and shelter trenches, and in every patch of natural cover, well in advance of the mass of wagons, and that from these favourable positions they beat back every attack directed against them, without themselves suffering to any great extent. Neither did they confine themselves to a passive defence, for, on occasions, small parties made bold counter-attacks. The assaults from the east and west failed to effect their purpose, since circumstances prevented the two attacks being delivered simultaneously, and since the fire from the Boer riflemen in their advanced posts, surprised and overwhelmed the assailants before they could push the attack home.

While these events were in progress on the flanks, the 6th Division was co-operating from the south. Two battalions of the 18th Brigade were filling the gap between the 13th Brigade and the Mounted Infantry, on the right, and they were ordered to guard against the possibility of an attack from outside by a Boer relieving force. Shortly after eight o'clock, the Yorkshire Regiment moved forward in extended order towards the river, in order to attract the enemy's attention from the attacks being directed against his flanks. They soon found that the Boers were lining the south bank of the river, but despite the heavy fire, they succeeded in advancing to within two hundred yards of the sharpshooters. A party of five officers and some sixty men dashed forward and cleared out the defenders, but only to

find further progress barred by the unfordable river. The regiment then received orders to halt (9 a.m.) two hundred yards to the south of the river.

During the Yorkshire advance, the regiments of the 13th Brigade extended and moved forward, the West Riding Regiment on the left of the Yorkshire, the Oxfordshire Light Infantry on the left again, and the Buffs in reserve. Gradually they worked their way towards the river, and though they suffered considerably from the enemy's rifle fire, they eventually arrived within four hundred yards of the trenches, when, at about 11.45 a.m. several companies of the West Riding, with a detachment of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, charged home and drove out the enemy. This final charge resulted in heavy casualties, the Oxfordshire Light Infantry losing LIEUTENANTS BRIGHT and BALL-ACTON, and six men killed, MAJOR C. R. DAY mortally wounded, and three officers and twenty-six men wounded. The Yorkshire and the regiments of the 13th Brigade had ably fulfilled their mission, and were now ordered to remain where they were, and not to cross the river; but in other parts of the field the battle still raged, and continued to do so until late in the afternoon. Again and again the troops assaulted from the east and from the west, but without success, and so engrossed in the fight were the troops on the right, that De Wet, heading a relieving force from the south-east, captured a commanding position, afterwards named Kitchener's Kopje, from which he was able to fire into the rear of the British.

Darkness put an end to the fighting which for nearly twelve hours had been continuous. The British soldier had more than upheld his reputation for persistent gallantry; and though, at nightfall, the laager remained uncaptured, Cronje's force was now held secure. Of the 15,000 British troops engaged on this day 1,262 were killed or wounded.

INVESTMENT OF CRONJE'S LAAGER.

It was at first proposed to repeat the assault on the laager on the following day, but Lord Roberts decided to

postpone further infantry attacks until the enemy had been subjected to a more complete bombardment by the howitzers and naval guns. The regiments, therefore, entrenched themselves in advantageous positions, and kept careful watch over the laager, occasionally making a demonstration, in order to draw the Boers from their cover, and force them to present a target to the guns. On the evening of the 19th, three regiments of the 6th Division (including the Oxfordshire Light Infantry) attempted to drive the enemy from Kitchener's Kopje, but the position was too strong to be carried by so small a force, which was consequently ordered to withdraw at daybreak on the 20th. Two days later a more systematic attack was organized, when the kopje was captured, and held for the remainder of the operations, although the Boers, under De Wet, strove hard to recapture it.

The investing force now suffered considerably from the effects of the weather, terrific thunderstorms frequently breaking over the bivouacs. Several men were killed by lightning, and the trenches were filled with water ; but the plight of the enemy in the laager was even worse, since the river rose rapidly and flooded the pits in which the Boers were sheltered. By this time, also, it became evident that the end could not be far off, for, each day, the swollen river brought down hundreds of carcasses of horses and oxen. That Cronje could now break out was known to be impossible, but the vigilance of the troops never relaxed, and it was still hoped to add to the glory of the victory by carrying the laager by assault. For this purpose, the Royal Engineers had, for several days, been pushing trenches forward, from the westward, on either side of the river, and eventually an assault was ordered to take place before daylight on the morning of the 27th. The Royal Canadian Regiment and a party of Royal Engineers advanced at 2.15 a.m., and at 2.50 a.m. reached a point within a hundred yards of the enemy's trenches. Their presence was then detected, and the Boers opened fire, thus bringing the advance to a halt ; but the Engineers set to work to dig a trench, and before

long the attacking force was well sheltered behind a parapet, provided with sandbag loopholes. At daybreak it was seen that barely a hundred yards separated the assailants from the enemy's trenches, and across this space a rifle duel forthwith commenced, but only to last for a few minutes. A white flag was seen over the Boer trench, and presently another was displayed over the main laager. No further shots were fired.

THE SURRENDER OF CRONJE.

At 6 a.m. on the 27th February Cronje surrendered unconditionally, and to the 6th Division fell the honour of taking over the prisoners, who numbered upwards of four thousand (including 150 wounded), and who, the same evening, were marched away, under escort of the Gloucestershire Regiment, to Klip Drift and the railway. At Cape Town they were shipped for St. Helena, where they remained until the end of the war.

For the next few days the troops halted, and awaited the arrival of supplies before continuing the advance on the Free State capital. That opposition would be met with was certain, as De Wet's force was known to be not far away, and the greater number of the Boers who had been investing Ladysmith were now being railed down to Bloemfontein as rapidly as possible ; for Ladysmith had been relieved two days after the capture of Cronje's force.

On the 1st March the 13th Brigade moved bivouac, a few miles eastward to Osfontein, where a halt was made until the 7th, when the forward movement commenced. The enemy had been located in a strong position some five or six miles from Osfontein, and Lord Roberts had decided to attempt to place De Wet's force in a situation similar to that of Cronje at Paardeberg. With this object in view, he directed the cavalry to move by a circuitous route to the rear of the position and thus cut off the retreat to Bloemfontein, while at the same time the infantry should drive the enemy into the bed of the Modder and there hold him,

the 6th Division effecting this by attacking the left flank of the position.

THE ADVANCE ON BLOEMFONTEIN.

In the dark hours of the morning the cavalry pushed forward, and the 6th Division followed, but until daylight came little progress was possible, and then, at about 5.45 a.m. it was seen that the Boers had realized the fate that was threatening them, and had already commenced to withdraw. French observing this, and aware that he was too late to strike with his cavalry where he had originally intended, was still hopeful of cutting in rear of the enemy farther away, and put his force in motion towards the north-east. While this was in progress, the 6th Division, at 9.45 a.m., deployed, and prepared to attack the kopjes, which were still strongly held by Boer riflemen: but the appearance of other British divisions in different directions warned the enemy's rear-guards of the danger of delaying retirement, and by 11 a.m. the 6th Division had occupied Seven Kopjes without opposition. Throughout the day the British troops, on both banks of the Modder, moved slowly forward on a wide front, and the Boers, mindful of Paardeberg, carefully withdrew before them but with sufficient rapidity to deny to the cavalry the opportunity for which they had hoped. That night the 6th Division bivouacked at Poplar Grove.

On the 8th March the Division marched about seven miles eastward, to Roodepoort, while the remainder of the troops remained at Poplar Grove until the 10th, when the final stage of the advance on Bloemfontein commenced. The force moved in three columns, by the three roads to the capital, the 6th Division, with a cavalry brigade and mounted infantry, forming the left column. The enemy was soon located on some high kopjes near Driefontein, and a long and hard fight ensued. The 6th Division suffered heavy losses (more than four hundred killed and wounded), but towards evening had the satisfaction of carrying the position at the point of the bayonet, and

thoroughly defeating the Boers, who, after removing their wounded, left upwards of a hundred dead on the field. The Oxfordshire Light Infantry had the misfortune to be acting as rearguard to the Division, and, except for a few stray shells which came their way, were not under fire.

This was the last serious opposition met with on the way to Bloemfontein, which was occupied by the British force on the morning of the 14th March.

During these operations, the Regiment had marched one hundred and fifty miles, and its strength had fallen from 616 of all ranks to 445, 3 officers and 17 men having been killed, 2 officers and 74 men having been wounded, and 1 officer and 74 men left sick in hospital. Exposure, fatigue, and short rations had left their mark on the whole army, and, before long, enteric and dysentery began to spread; but, as the Boers still hovered about the neighbourhood of the Free State capital, there was plenty of work to be done. For a month the Regiment was employed on outpost duty, with an occasional expedition to drive away parties of the enemy, and it was not until the 18th April that tents were once again issued.

ON THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION.

When, on the 3rd May, Lord Roberts commenced his march northwards on Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, the 6th Division was left at Bloemfontein, to guard the town, and to provide for the safety of the lines of communication of the army. Raiding parties of Boers soon appeared in the vicinity of the railway, and on the 6th June (the day after the capture of Pretoria) the Regiment, with other troops, was despatched to Kroonstad, to reinforce the garrison of that place. No serious engagement took place within the next few weeks, though the Regiment was constantly on the move, hoping to capture elusive raiding parties, headed by Christian De Wet and others.

By this time disease had played considerable havoc in the ranks, 54 men having died, and 6 officers and 150 men

having been invalidated home; but, on the other hand, the Regiment had been kept well up to strength by the arrival from England of drafts numbering 10 officers and 570 men, in addition to the Volunteer Company, consisting of 3 officers and 111 men.

THE M.I. COMPANY.

Although the Regiment did not take part in the invasion of the Transvaal, its Mounted Infantry Company (numbering some 140 men) was well to the front throughout the operations. Leaving England on the 13th January, the Company landed at Cape Town on the 8th February, and was immediately despatched to the north of Cape Colony, to watch the Orange river crossings during Lord Roberts march into the Free State, eventually reaching Bloemfontein on the 3rd April. A few days later, when the army was reorganized preparatory to an advance, the Mounted Infantry was formed into a division of two brigades, each brigade consisting of four corps. The company of the Regiment was placed in the 8th Corps, which it joined at Karee Siding, some twenty-four miles north of Bloemfontein, and with this corps it marched and fought to Pretoria, being always in advance, but losing only two men killed and one officer and three men wounded.

THE REGIMENT ON TREK.

During the whole of August and September 1900, the Regiment was employed, with other troops, in operations against De Wet, marching about the country between Kroonstad and the Vaal, and covering a distance of not less than five hundred miles. The enemy was seldom met with, and although occasionally the column was able to surprise his rearguard, the mobility of the Boers usually enabled them to elude the small British force, consisting as it did of only infantry and artillery. At one time or another all the forces in South Africa were employed in operating against De Wet and his commandos, but only to be out-

witted on all occasions, and we may say here that the astute Boer remained at large to continue his guerilla methods until peace was proclaimed.

By the 3rd October, on which date the Regiment marched into Heilbron, the Boer forces had been broken up and dispersed all over the country. Many thousands had been taken prisoner, or had surrendered, but the stalwarts who still kept the field were sufficient in number to prolong the war for a further eighteen months. This was perhaps the most trying period for the British troops, who were seldom able to secure a victory over the bands of guerillas, who usually contrived to slip away at the decisive moment. Flying columns traversed the country in every direction, and the establishment of the Regiment at Heilbron was part of a great scheme for driving the Boers into a given area, and forcing them to surrender. This, however, was only partially successful, as the majority of the commandos refused to be driven, or to stand and fight, and there was usually a loophole by means of which they were able to effect their escape.

While the headquarters of the Regiment thus remained at Heilbron, the Mounted Infantry Company, which after the occupation of Pretoria had been continuously on the move in various parts of the Orange River Colony, marched into Heilbron, to refit, on the 5th October 1900, but three days later was once again on the march. During October it was working, in the country to the west of the main line, between Kroonstad and Potchefstroom, endeavouring once again to drive De Wet's men into the meshes, and early in November the Company took part in a brilliant little affair at Bothaville.

THE M.I. COMPANY AT BOTHAVILLE.

Colonel Le Gallais, who commanded the column with which the M.I. Company of the Regiment was at this time serving, had with him three companies of Imperial Yeomanry, three battalions of mounted infantry, and a battery of horse artillery—in all about 1,000 men. Having

heard of the presence of a Boer laager near Bothaville, he moved rapidly on the 5th November towards that place, and on approaching the Valsch River in the afternoon, his advance guard was fired on by some Boers on the ridge beyond. The horse artillery battery replied, and drove off the enemy, whereupon the advanced guard occupied the ridge, and remained there during the night, while the main body of the column moved up to Bothaville, which the Boers had evacuated earlier in the day. The tracks of the enemy's guns were clearly visible in the soft ground, and at 4 a.m. next morning, the advanced guard pushed its scouts forward, and soon surprised a Boer piquet of five men, and captured them before they were able to raise the alarm. A little further on, the mounted infantry, on reaching a low ridge, suddenly saw before them, barely 300 yards away, De Wet's long-sought laager. The ridge was immediately lined by the advanced guard, who, assisted by two guns of the battery, poured a heavy fire into the panic-stricken burghers, who, as soon as they grasped the situation, fled to their horses, and endeavoured to break away. Many succeeded in making their escape (amongst them De Wet and Ex-President Steyn), but some two hundred failed to secure their horses, and were forced to take shelter behind the stone walls of a kraal close to the site of their laager. These now displayed the greatest gallantry, even running three guns out into the open and fighting them in the most desperate way, until the British battery forced them to shelter by deluging them with case and shrapnel. But this was only the beginning of the fierce fight, for the Boers, recovering from their first panic, soon settled down to steady work, each man using his rifle with deadly effect from behind excellent cover.

There were in the British position a farmhouse and some kraals, and these were occupied, the former as Le Gallais' headquarters, and the latter by small parties of mounted infantry. But the farmhouse soon proved itself a veritable deathtrap, as those within were visible through the open doors and windows. At 6.30 a.m. La Gallais was mortally

wounded, and before long others also fell. Presently it was discovered that the Boers who had escaped from the laager were riding back, and threatening the flanks, but at 8 o'clock a timely reinforcement of 150 men came up and drove them off. For two hours after this the fighting continued unabated, but at 10.15 a.m. the long-awaited reinforcement of yeomanry and mounted infantry came galloping on to the field, and speedily encircled the laager. Arrangements were then made for a portion of the original force to deliver an assault with the bayonet, but before this could take place, the enemy saw the hopelessness of further resistance and hoisted the white flag. Six guns, two machine guns, as well as a great quantity of ammunition, with many rifles, horses, and carts were captured. Twenty-five Boers were buried on the field, and the prisoners numbered one hundred and thirty, of whom thirty were wounded. But the price paid was heavy; for, of the British, three officers and ten men were killed, and eight officers and twenty-five men were wounded. The company of the Regiment played a gallant part in securing this hard-won victory, in the first place being with the advanced guard, and afterwards, throughout the day, in the front line. The casualties in the company were fortunately few, though Captain G. N. Colvile (in command) was severely wounded.

EVENTS OF 1901—1902.

When Lord Roberts handed over the command of the troops in South Africa to Lord Kitchener, and left the country in December, 1900, it was imagined that the spirit of the Boers had been broken, and that it only remained to clear up the situation by hemming in the several commandos, still carrying on a guerilla warfare. This, however, proved no easy task, for the Boers continued to offer a stubborn resistance in every direction.

In January the headquarters of the Regiment were at Heilbron, with strong detachments guarding the railway at Leeupoort and Gottenburg. During the next few months

small parties of Boers were occasionally seen in the neighbourhood, and slight engagements took place, but Heilbron, which had been thoroughly well covered by defences, was never attacked by the Boers in force, and the main object for its occupation was the formation of a Boer refugee camp, and as a base for the various flying columns now scouring the country. In the spring two companies of the Regiment were on trek with such columns, and remained out for several months, marching hundreds of miles—even as far south as the Orange River.

In June the Regiment moved to Kroonstad, and in July to Bloemfontein, marching thence, towards the end of the month, to the Modder River, where it held the drifts about Koodoerand and Paardeberg, as part of a scheme for circumventing the enemy. Early in September, when the new blockhouse system was instituted, the Regiment returned to Bloemfontein, and, within twenty-four hours, was despatched by rail to Kopjes Station, near which a line of blockhouses had been erected and already occupied temporarily by a draft for the Regiment lately arrived from England. This blockhouse line ran in a north-westerly direction from Kopjes to Vlakfontein, where it joined a similar line starting from the junction of the Mooi and Vaal rivers; and the object of these and similar lines was to divide the country up into areas which could be readily cleared of raiding parties of the enemy. The blockhouses were erected about three quarters of a mile apart, though the actual distance depended on the configuration of the ground, but in all cases the garrisons of adjacent blockhouses commanded the interval between them with their rifles, and moreover a rush by mounted Boers was provided for by the erection of strong wire entanglements, closing the intervals.

In the course of the next few days, the Regiment occupied some thirty-five blockhouses, and connected up with the portion of line held by the Grenadier Guards. There they remained for a month, being called upon occasionally to drive off small parties of Boers who attempted to break through the line, but having no serious

fighting. Towards the end of October this line was removed, and the Regiment took up a fresh section of blockhouses, viz. :—northwards from Lace Diamond Mines, on the Kroonstad-Vaal River line ; while a month later it occupied, as well, a secondary line, from Lace Diamond Mines to Bothaville. These latter blockhouses and others along the Valsch River were garrisoned by the Regiment up to the close of the war in May, 1902.

Blockhouse life was dull, though at the same time arduous ; for it was necessary to be on the alert both by day and by night, since small parties of the enemy constantly attempted to break through and escape from the mobile columns which harried them within the enclosed areas. A certain number of men of the Regiment not required for blockhouse duty were kept ready to move against any bodies of the enemy reported to be in the neighbourhood, and this flying column, assisted by some guns and mounted troops, did good service in keeping the Boers on the move and in capturing considerable quantities of stores, cattle, sheep, and horses. But all fighting on a large scale had ceased many months before, and though some sharp little skirmishes occasionally took place, the last few months of the war were devoid of any great excitement.

The work of the Mounted Infantry Company during 1901 and 1902 was much more interesting, and the men who composed it seldom had a day's rest, being in the saddle from morning to night, and covering an immense amount of ground, both in the Transvaal and in the Orange River Colony. The Company was attached at different times to various columns, and assisted in capturing numbers of Boer prisoners, horses, cattle, etc. It fought in many smart skirmishes, and was often praised for its excellent work, several of the men receiving decorations and promotion for gallantry in the field.

For two years and a half the Regiment had been on active service, and it remained in South Africa for six months after the proclamation of peace, when it returned to England, preparatory to proceeding to India. Its losses

in South Africa amounted to 3 officers and 29 men killed, and 1 officer (MAJOR R. W. PORTER, D.S.O.) and 118 men died of disease. While 8 officers and 96 men were wounded, and 433 were invalided to England, though many of the latter recovered rapidly, and rejoined in time to take part in further fighting. For their services, the majority of the officers and men received the Queen's Medal with 4 clasps and the King's Medal with 2 clasps. Fifteen N.C.O.'s and men were awarded the Medal for Distinguished Conduct in the Field, viz.:—Colour-Sergeant W. KING; Pioneer-Sergeant G. BEER; Sergeants J. CRIPPS, G. OLNEY, J. WIXON; Corporals G. BURKE, J. FOWLER, J. ILETT, J. FOWLES, F. JONES; Lance-Corporals C. A. BRADBROOK, H. SMITH, A. SYKES; Privates A. ANDERSON, D. SATCHELL. Two N.C.O.'s (Sergeants F. HUDSON and F. COLQUHOUN) were promoted 2nd Lieutenants in other Corps, and the following individual honours and rewards were bestowed on officers of the Regiment:—one Companion of the Bath, seven Companions of the Distinguished Service Order, and five promotions to higher rank.

To the memory of the brave men who lost their lives while fighting in South Africa, a handsome monument was subsequently erected near Magdalen Bridge, Oxford. That monument, raised to the gallant dead, will serve to remind future generations of Regimental Soldiers of the unselfish devotion to duty which characterised their forefathers—men renowned not only for their valour and discipline, but also for their generosity and kindliness alike to comrade and fallen foe.

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